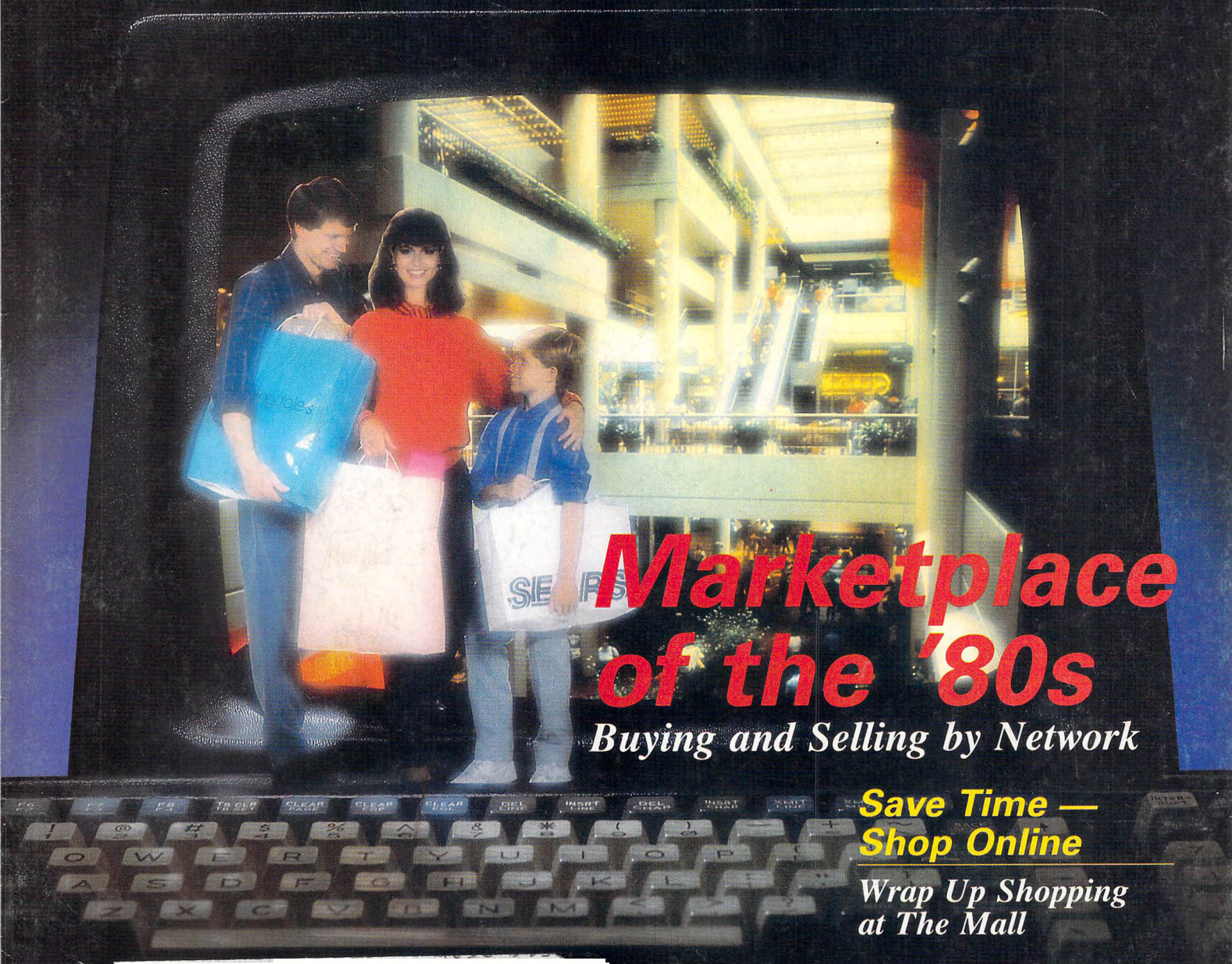
A COMPUSERVE PUBLICATION PRINTED MONTHLY/ONLINE DAILY

ONLINE TODAY

THE COMPUTER COMMUNICATIONS MAGAZINE

November, 1986 $2.50



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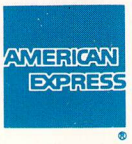

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ELECTRONIC EDITION

Online Today Electronic Edition provides daily-updated computer and information industry news, coverage of CompuServe services, commentary, computer product reviews and more.

GO OLT	**A GO-page directory** *of the day's top computer industry news and a summary of key OLT page numbers.*
OLT-160	**The Monitor Daily News** *main menu.*
OLT-90	**Today's computer and information industry news.**
OLT-20	**The current week's Monitor news.**
OLT-130	**Behind the Screens℠.** *Computer and information industry news, rumor and gossip.*
OLT-50	**CompuServe Update** *main menu. Lists all CompuServe news departments.*
OLT-70	**What's New on CompuServe.**
OLT-80	**CompuServe Community News.**
OLT-120	**Forum Conference Schedules.**
OLT-140	**Beginner's Corner.**
OLT-600	**Resident Memory.**
OLT-3500	**Online With Charles Bowen.**
OLT-3700	**Uploads.** *A bi-weekly column summarizing new files in forum data libraries.*
OLT-1000	**Computer Events Calendar.**
OLT-2000	**OLT Special Reports.**
OLT-3000	**Computer Legislation Database.**
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OLT-250	**New Product Announcements** *main menu.*
EBB-11	**Instructions** *on use of the Electronic Bounce Back reader service system.*
EBB-160	**Online Today Display ads** *main menu.*
EBB-70	**Shopper's Guide.**

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As a CompuServe Subscriber, you are invited to do your Holiday Shopping on Comp-u-store OnLine during our Holiday Open House, Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 1986! During this special event, you can take advantage of FREE membership access, 24 hours of FREE connect time and up to 50% savings on quality merchandise! As you browse through our database of over 250,000 name-brand items, we're sure you will find something for everyone on your Holiday list! And that's not all—enter the Holiday Drawing and you could win a $1,000 Shopping Spree!

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DEAR READER

This is the time of year most of us begin to seriously consider holiday shopping. Maybe this will be the first year you'll seriously consider doing your shopping electronically. Think of it: No more parking lot demolition derby; no more clerks with brass knuckles and no more Soviet-style checkout lines.

With online services such as The Electronic Mall and Comp-u-store — and dozens of merchants to choose from — you can order most every gift by computer and receive it in time for the holidays.

Find out more about online shopping in this month's cover feature beginning on page 16. We've also included a six-page gift idea section — all items you can order online from merchants in The Electronic Mall.

Happy holidays, and watch out for those rude clerks.

* * *

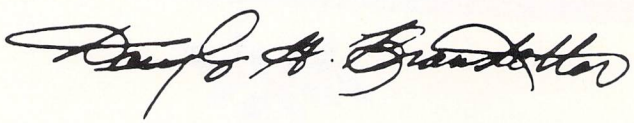
The "Beginner's Corner" feature has been around in *Online Today* for more than two years. Geared for novice users of the CompuServe Information Service, the column is packed with tutorials and step-by-step "how-to" information about navigating through the Information Service.

With this issue, the column changes hands, but not its mission. Contributor Dave Peyton, co-author of *How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe*, will be writing the column from now on. You can expect the same insightful "tour guide" approach to learning about CompuServe as you did from former columnist Alex Krislov.

We especially encourage new and intermediate CompuServe users to read this column and to send feedback and questions to Dave Peyton via EasyPlex. His User ID number will be published at the end of every column.

Advanced CompuServe users will find an in-depth tutorial on using IQuest in this month's "Online" column by Charles Bowen (page 56). If you need to research daily newspaper articles on a specific topic, it's no longer necessary to drive to a library with the out-of-town newspapers you need and spend hours at the microfilm machine.

Many newspapers have digitized their daily issues and made them available through full-text, electronic databases that can be searched quickly. Knight-Ridder's VU/TEXT service and Data Times Information Network offer electronic versions of newspapers ranging from the Boston Globe to the San Jose Mercury News. CompuServe subscribers now can access VU/TEXT and Data Times through the IQuest gateway.



Douglas G. Branstetter
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ONLINE® TODAY

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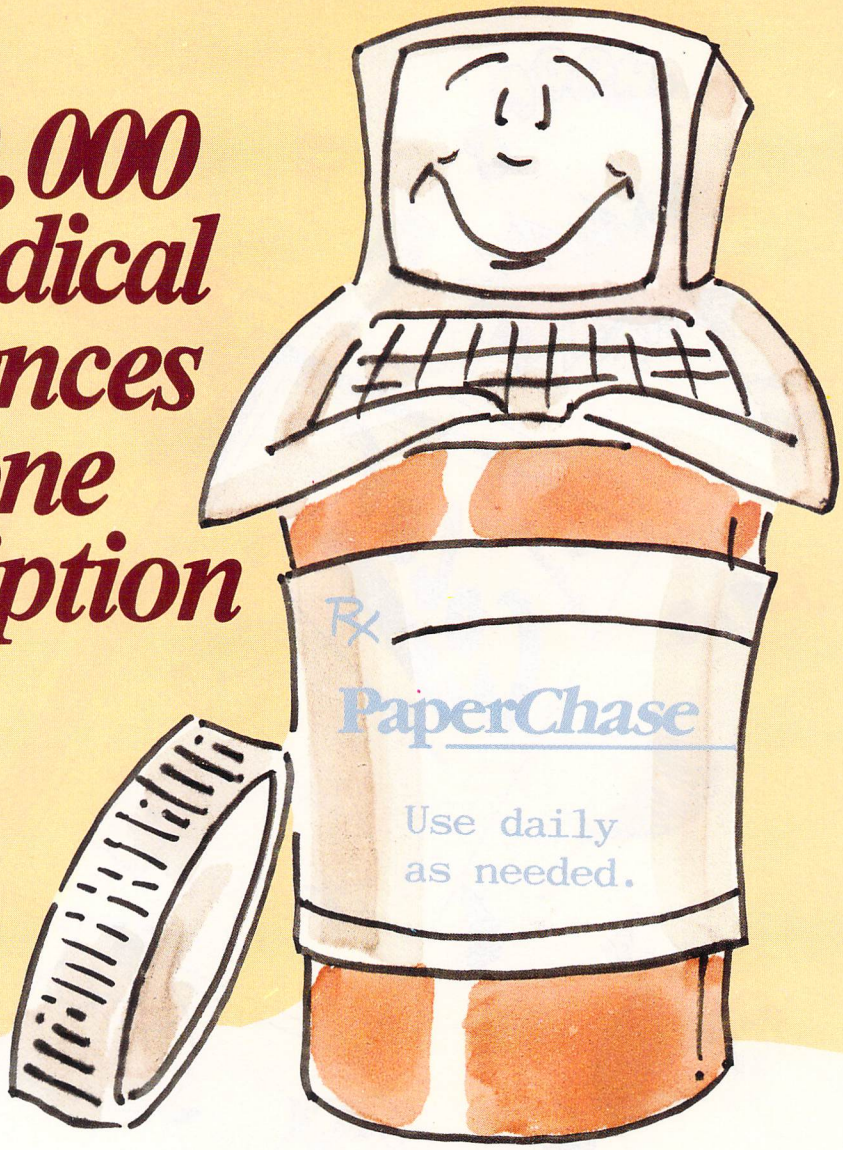

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LETTERS

Uploads Column

In the fall edition of "At Your Service," a direct-mail packet sent to CompuServe subscribers, I noticed an announcement about free online software available through *Online Today*. I spent about 15 minutes searching but could not find it.

C.Y. Neville
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Editor's Note: The announcement was referring to a new column, "Uploads," in Online Today *magazine. A more current version of the column is published every two weeks in* Online Today Electronic Edition *(GO OLT-3700). "Uploads" summarizes the new files available in CompuServe's forum data libraries. In this issue, refer to page 32.*

The "Uploads" column is interesting but it does not cover any of the forums that I visit regularly. For example, I know the Whole Earth Forum, the Religion Forum and the Issues Forum have new files, but this information does not appear in "Uploads."

Brad Hicks
St. Louis, Mo.

Editor's Note: "Uploads" is intended to be a sampling of new software and files available in the CompuServe forums. If you don't see your particular forums mentioned in the monthly print version of "Uploads," check the biweekly version in Online Today Electronic Edition.

Coverage of Atari

I am disturbed by a practice that has continued since I started receiving your magazine a year ago. Most of the articles in *Online Today* relate to the MS-DOS microcomputers. As a loyal Atari user, this bothers me.

John W. Ellenberger
Belvidere, N.J.

News about Apple Computer

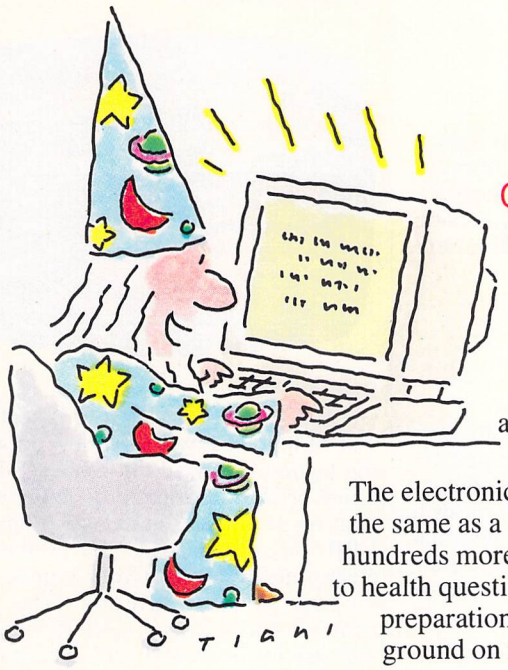
I am a new reader of *Online Today*. Since I am a stockholder of Apple Computer Co., one of my main uses of the magazine and the CompuServe Information Service will be to acquire current information about Apple. Can you tell me where to find this information?

Eric Brill
San Francisco, Calif.

Editor's Note: In Online Today Electronic Edition *(GO OLT), check the daily-updated computer industry news in "Monitor" (GO OLT-90) and commentary in "Behind the Screens" (GO OLT-130). For news about upcoming Apple forum conferences, refer to "Forum Conference Schedules" (GO OLT-120) and "Community News" (GO OLT-80).*

You can visit the Apple-related forums by typing GO MAUG. In addition, you can use the Executive News Service (GO ENS) to set up a customized electronic folder to clip all stories mentioning the words APPLE COMPUTER. Instructions are available on the ENS menu.

Encyclopedia Electronica!



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LETTERS

Tecmar Products

I am an avid reader of the computer industry news in *Online Today Electronic Edition*, but I don't recall seeing any mention of problems at Tecmar Inc., a major Ohio manufacturer of microcomputer peripherals.

Two mail-order firms have told me that they have had difficulty in getting any shipments from Tecmar recently. One of the firms investigated the situation and his distributor told him that Tecmar is in a state of disarray because it was acquired by another firm.

I have not seen this mentioned in any of the computer magazines. If *Online Today* could write about Tecmar in a future Monitor article or Behind the Screens, that would be helpful.

Randy Forgaard
Watertown, Mass.

*Editor's Note: Rexon Inc. has signed a formal agreement to acquire Tecmar Inc., a marketer of add-on products for the personal computer industry (*Online Today Electronic Edition *Monitor, Sept. 26, 1986).*

Company-sponored Forums

I'm in the public relations business and several of my clients are computer companies. The article, "The Manufacturer Connection" (Sept. issue) raises a question. Where can I get more information on how a company can sponsor an online forum, such as those provided on CompuServe by Ashton-Tate, Microsoft and other companies?

Peter Cohen
Boston, Mass.

Editor's Note: For more information on how to start a company-sponsored forum, write to the Director of New Business Development, CompuServe, 5000 Arlington Centre Blvd., Columbus, Ohio 43220.

Planning Ahead

I enjoy reading *Online Today* and I find the features informative and well-written. However, the English major in me cannot resist pointing out one locution that increasingly seems to appear in periodicals, business correspondence and speech.

The "Beginner's Corner" column (Sept. issue, p. 28) concludes with the advice: "A little preplanning is always worth your while . . ." What is "preplanning?" Why isn't "planning" sufficient? "Preplanning," a self-contained tautology, belongs in the same class as "preprogrammed."

Bruce Williams
Federal Bay, Wash.

Guidelines to Requesting Information Through EBB

Electronic Bounce Back

Electronic Bounce Back is *Online Today*'s electronic version of the traditional reader inquiry card. To request additional information about products or services described in *Online Today*, simply access CompuServe and type GO EBB at any prompt.

Display Ads

GO EBB-160. Inquiries to this section will be followed by a brief description of the *Online Today* ad. To request additional printed information, simply enter your name and address at the prompts.* EBB will add your User ID number and electronically forward your request to the appropriate advertiser(s). The names, addresses and User ID numbers will also be forwarded via US Mail at the end of each month.

Editorial Articles/Reviews

At the end of each electronic version product review, you'll be asked if you wish to request further information through the Electronic Bounce Back system. A "yes" response will let the system prompt you for your name, address and other information so that your request can be forwarded to the appropriate company. If you respond "no," the system will return you to the previous menu.

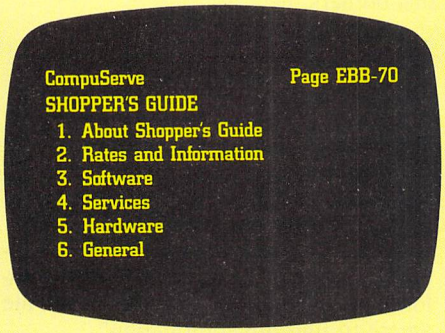
To request information about products reviewed in the print edition, go to page EBB-280 and select the appropriate listing, such as November Hardware Reviews. At the next menu, select the product you're interested in. If you answer "yes" at the question prompt, the EBB system will prompt you for the necessary information.

Requests to these sections will be stored and forwarded by traditional mail once each month.

Shopper's Guide

GO EBB-70. This is *Online Today*'s classified section and is designed to enable readers to easily scan areas of interest.

To request information from Shopper's Guide advertisers, send messages via CompuServe EasyPlex or use traditional methods of communication.



***Note:**
Additional requests during the same session will not require you to re-enter your name and address.

finger Shopping

CompuServe offers a variety of products that save you time and money whenever you log on. Others that bring online products to a much fuller life. And still others that make being a CompuServe subscriber a more fashionable pastime.

NOTE: Prices for our entire product line have been revised since our last sale. Postage and handling charges, previously included in the price of each item, are now automatically calculated at the end of the ordering procedure. (A table at the back of this section outlines the new shipping and handling prices.)

New National Bulletin Board Users Guide and Reference Card
FOR SALE, WANTED, NOTICE. The National Bulletin Board is a free electronic advertising service for subscribers to the CompuServe Information Service. This manual prepares you to participate. Search listings by keyword. Take advantage of special features that help swiftly pinpoint items of interest.

$5.95

New EDIT Guide and Reference Card
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$5.50

New CompuServe Almanac
There are literally hundreds of offerings on the CompuServe Information Service you may have never visited. Use the CompuServe Almanac to become acquainted with all of them — without visiting them individually online. Its 300+ pages are loaded with helpful features, presenting products in "workbook" style to help you research and recall key destinations by area and page number. It's certain to pay for itself in connect time savings.

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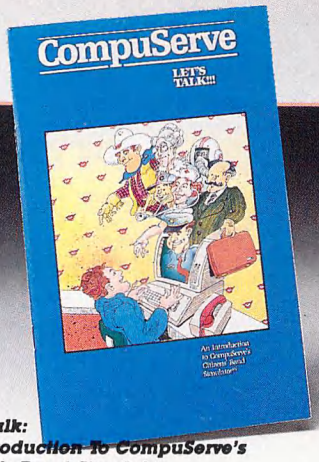
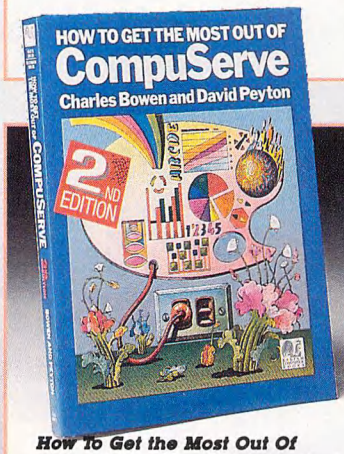


Let's Talk:
An Introduction To CompuServe's Citizen's Band Simulator

Although you can teach yourself to *access* CB in a single session, you won't have any idea about the real capacity of CB as a communications utility and modern day party line until you read this primer for computer conversation.

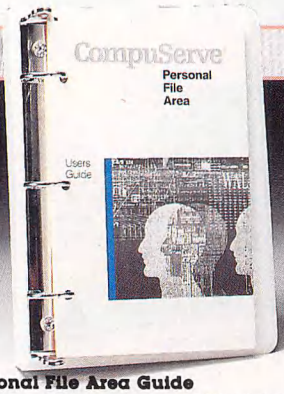
$4.95



How To Get the Most Out Of CompuServe (Second Edition)
by Charles Bowen and David Peyton

The first edition of this book from Bantam earned acclaim from longtime CompuServe users, novices, and even non-subscribers for its step-by-step discussion of CompuServe's leading products. The second edition also includes a $6 CREDIT!

Reg. $16.95 **SAVE $4** **$12.95**



Personal File Area Guide

All subscribers receive 128K of storage in a personal file area. EasyPlex messages, Executive News Service clippings, files, "form" letters and more can be stored for 30 days without charge. File management programs, text editors, disk storage techniques, EasyPlex shortcuts, and more are explained in this guide. Includes: ICS, Terminal Parameter, and EDIT Reference Cards.

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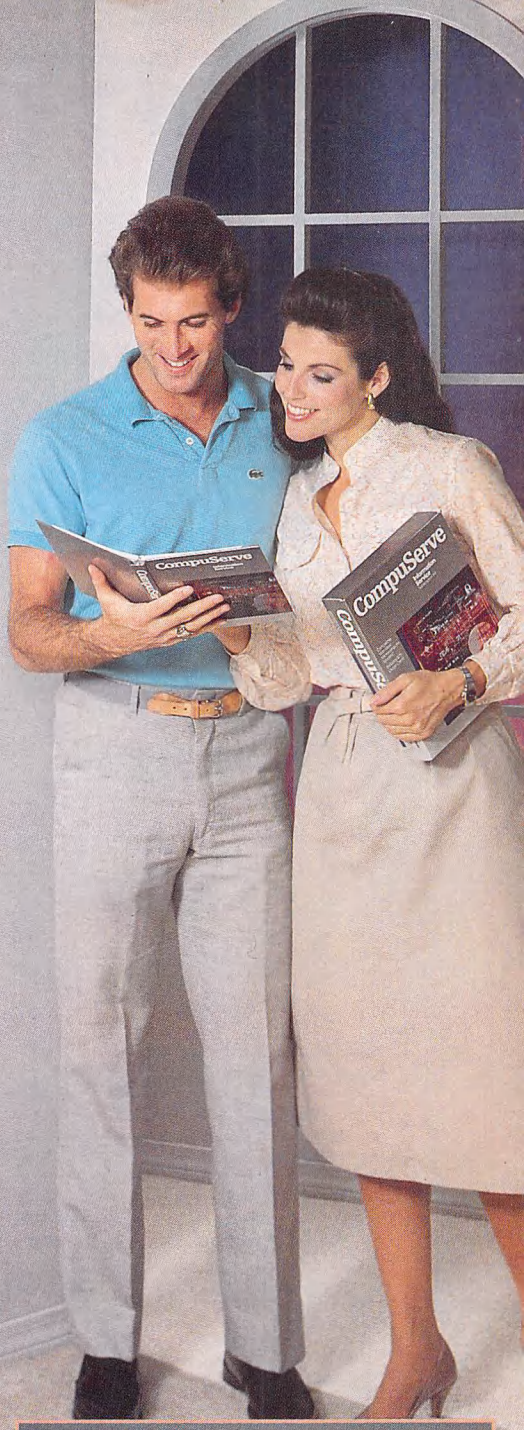
- an introductory subscription to *Online Today* magazine

The Kit includes an **Information Service Users Guide** (also available separately), a spiral-bound, hardcover 200-page guide, highly recommended for subscribers who've come online through the CompuServe IntroPak™ program. The guide covers: EasyPlex® electronic mail; the Executive News Service; the National Bulletin Board; Citizen's Band Simulator; forum message boards, data libraries and conferencing; information transfers to and from your computer; travel services; financial services; electronic shopping; interactive games; and more. When purchased separately the guide also includes: a System Configuration Diagram, an alphabetized Quick Reference Word index, and over a dozen Reference Cards.

Subscription Kit **$39.95**

Users Guide Reg. $14.95 **Save $8.45** **$6.50**



BLACKDRAGON Tee-shirt

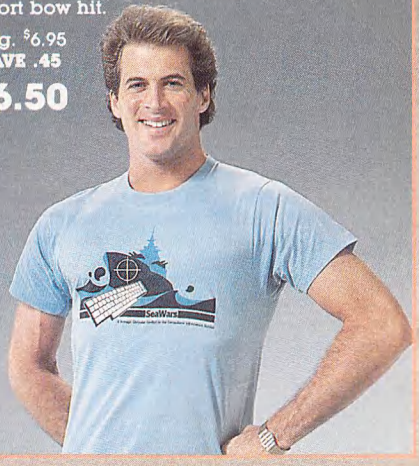
Cross the Labyrinth, slay the dragon and live? Announce your success with this black tee-shirt with white BlackDragon illustration.

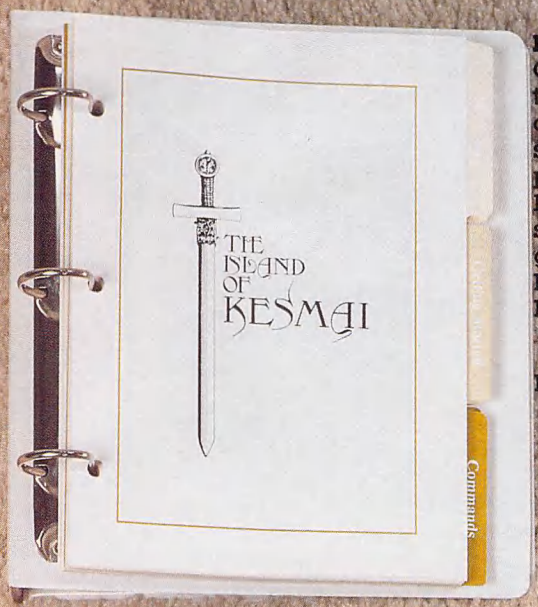
Reg. $6.95 **SAVE .45** **$6.50**

SeaWARS Tee-shirt

Now hear this: SeaWARS enlistees will be considered out of uniform without the official SeaWARS tee-shirt. Available appropriately in navy on light blue, the shirt depicts a port bow hit.

Reg. $6.95 **SAVE .45** **$6.50**



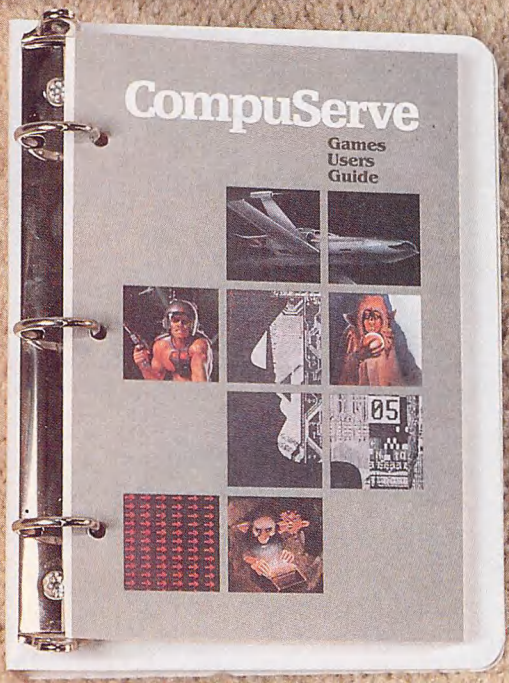


New Island of Kesmai Guide
One of CompuServe's leading adventure games, Island of Kesmai is like no other online island you may have visited. Prepare yourself — with this comprehensive island atlas. Meet the inhabitants. Learn their customs and social mores. You won't just bring the game's interactive features to greater light, you'll lead a longer life in your island role.

Reg. $16.50 **SAVE $1.55** **$14.95**

MegaWars I Package
Realistic accessories for the fantasy gamer. This package includes a MegaWars Briefing Guide in a three-ring binder, along with a series of five MegaWars spacecraft blueprints and a galaxy map.

Reg. $16.95 **SAVE $2** **$14.95**



CompuServe Games Guide
CompuServe leads the online computing world in multi-player, adventure, space and war game offerings for microcomputer gamers of all ages and intellects. Play them to meet fascinating characters, negotiate puzzling scenarios, plan elaborate strategies, and more. This survey of the CompuServe game universe offers descriptions of all our game offerings and a section on getting the most out of our Gamers' Forum.

Reg. $14.95 **SAVE $4** **$10.95**

MegaWars Color Poster
Handsome full color MegaWars wall poster depicting an evil Kryon confronting the champions of the Colonist's Empire. Measures 25" x 38".

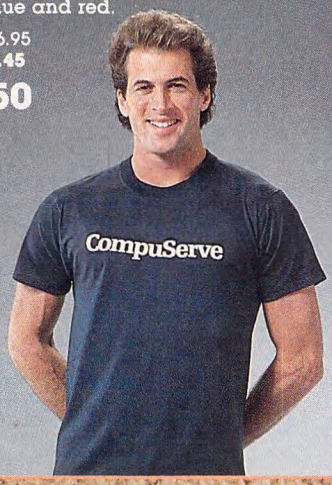
Reg. $4.95 **SAVE $2.45** **$2.50**

New CompuServe Logo Sweat-shirt
Make CompuServe a name for all seasons with this sturdy long sleeve sweat shirt. Available in light blue, navy blue and red.

Reg. $19.95
SAVE $2
$17.95

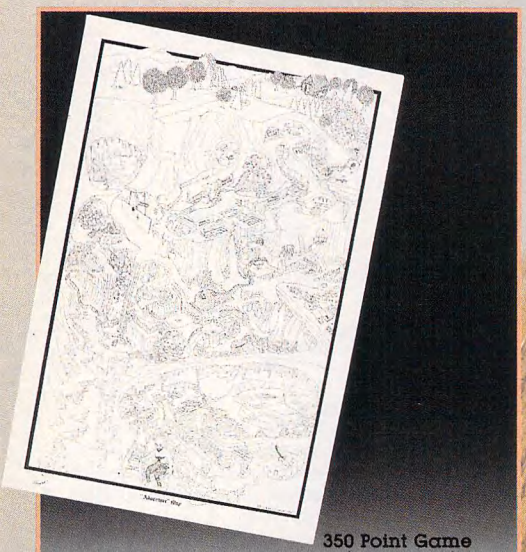
CompuServe Logo Tee-shirt
Announce your online allegiance with this cotton/poly tee-shirt silkscreened with the CompuServe logo. Available in light blue, navy blue and red.

Reg. $6.95
SAVE .45
$6.50



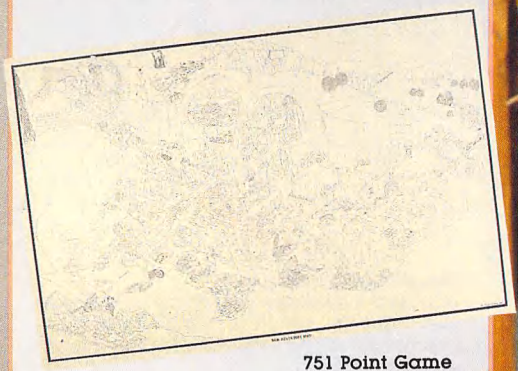
"I've Got A Handle On CompuServe CB"
Tell the world you're a part of the fastest growing interactive communications revolution since the telephone — CB — with this colorful tee-shirt. Available in selected colors listed online.

Reg. $6.95
SAVE .45
$6.50



350 Point Game
Reg. $3.95 **SAVE $2.45**
$1.50

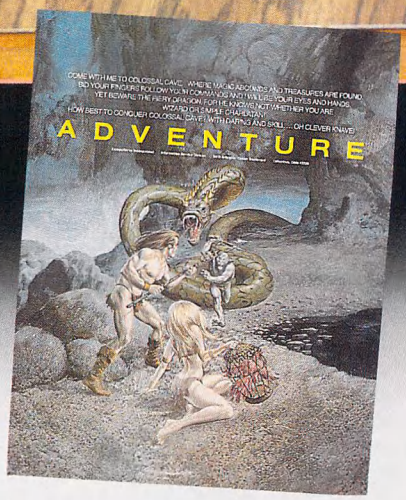
Adventure Game Maps
Exciting adventure maps, drawn in outline so participants can color their maps to match their imaginations. Both illustrate pathways and pitfalls one encounters in the Adventure game's Colossal cave. Available for both the 350 and 751 point games.



751 Point Game
Reg. $4.95 **SAVE $3**
$1.95

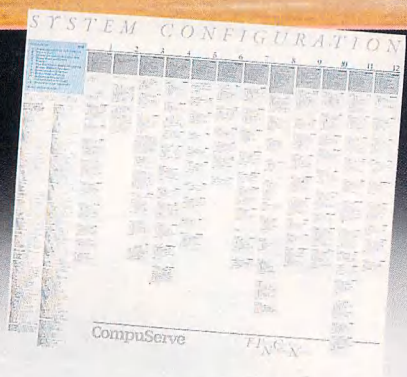
New CompuServe Digital Desk Clock
Mounted within a clear lucite desk stand for high-visibility, this contemporary timepiece is an attractive and useful addition to any computer workstation — home or office. It prominently displays the CompuServe logo and comes with a calendar in an adjacent window that includes interchangeable monthly templates which can represent any configuration of days in a month.

Reg. $10.95 **SAVE $4.45** **$6.50**



Adventure Game Color Poster
Two able Adventurers battle a huge green serpent and an axe-wielding dwarf in this vivid full color poster. Measures 18" x 24".

Reg. $4.95 **SAVE $3** **$1.95**



CompuServe Information Service System Configuration Wall Chart
This 35" x 33" poster (5/86 version) depicts all screens appearing on the Top Menu and all screens accessible from those initial choices.

Mailed in tube **$4.95**
Shipped folded **$3.95**

CompuServe: First Choice of a Network Nation — Poster
World-renowned illustrator, Fred Otnes, produced the commissioned illustration that is the focal point for this full color, 23" x 30" poster. A perfect addition to a home computer alcove or office wall. Shipped unfolded in a sturdy mailing tube.

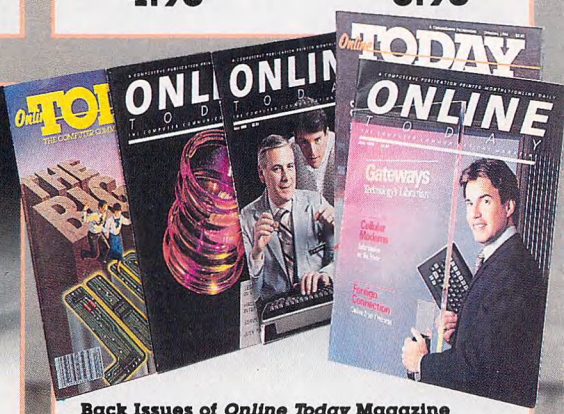
Reg. $4.95 **SAVE $1.45** **$3.50**

CompuServe Three-ring Binders with Logo

1½" spine, for 8½" x 11" pages (vinyl) **$3.50**

1" spine, for 8½" x 11" pages (vinyl) **$2.95**

1½" hardboard binder and slipcase for 5½" x 8½" pages
Reg. $3.95
SAVE $1.45
$2.50



Back Issues of *Online Today* Magazine
Online Today magazine's back issues represent a cache of incisive articles tracking the evolution and impact of videotex and computer communication. Use a list of feature articles from back issues, provided online, to obtain volumes missing from your set, or to select issues of interest published before you became a subscriber.

Reg. $2.50 **SAVE $1** **$1.50**

Personal Color Radar Software
Download information compiled online from National Weather Service reporting stations to create color coded charts of precipitation patterns on a map of the continental United States. For the IBM PC, XT or PCjr (128K RAM), or the TRS-80 Color Computer (32K RAM)

$59.95

VIDTEX™ Terminal Communications Software
No one links you to CompuServe like CompuServe. Whether you have an Apple®, an Atari®, or a Commodore® . . . you'll get the best link-up with genuine CompuServe communications software. (Complete information about VIDTEX compatibility requirements is available online: GO VIDTEX.) Only CompuServe gives you all of these features in a complete communications software package:

- "instant" FREE software updates online
- error-free uploading and downloading on CompuServe
- high-resolution graphics
- automatic logon and menu navigation files
- programmable function keys
- full printer support (including "print screen")
- capture buffer
- adjustable communication settings
- cursor positioning
- support of Hayes-compatible modems

For the Atari 800, 800 XL, 600 XL with 64 K,1200 XL, 65 XE, 130 XE
For the Apple II Family
For the Commodore 64
For TRS-80 Model III and Color Computer

$39.95

Professional Connection™ Communications Software
No one links your IBM PC, XT, or PCjr. to CompuServe like CompuServe. The Professional Connection includes all the features of VIDTEX, plus:

- COLOR graphics
- user-defined phone directory
- user-defined dialogues with the Remote Job Script Command Language
- powerful command language

$59.95

FREE with qualifying purchase of $25

CompuServe Information Service System Configuration Wall Chart

As a special incentive to place an online order during the Fingershopping Fall Sale, any order over $25 placed between October 1 and November 31 will receive a CompuServe Information Service System Configuration Wall Chart (new 5/86). FREE. The chart (folded version) will be included automatically in qualifying orders, there is no need to enter an order for your bonus item. To assure delivery prior to the holidays, place your order no later than November 10.

ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS
POSTAGE/HANDLING CHARGES

Detailed descriptions and prices for all products available for Fingershopping can be found online. GO ORDER at any prompt.

Non-subscribers may order by calling 800/848-8199.
In Ohio or Canada call 614/457-0802.

Based upon the total price of your merchandise, postage and handling is automatically calculated according to the following scale and added to your total.

Amount	Postage/Handling
$ 0 — $ 7.49	$1.50
$ 7.50 — $14.99	$2.00
$15.00 — $39.99	$2.50
$40.00 — $69.99	$3.00
$70.00 — and up	$3.50

CompuServe®

Corporate Headquarters
5000 Arlington Centre Blvd.
Columbus, Ohio 43220

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Kleiner Charts Networking Course

You may not realize it, but the simple process of logging on to CompuServe, checking into a few forums, consulting a database or two and logging off makes you a technical wizard in the eyes of many.

Learning how to use various electronic databases is the subject of a graduate level course at New York University. The course, "Computer Networking," is taught by free-lance computer journalist Art Kleiner, forum administrator of the Whole Earth Forum.

"The purpose of the class is to train students in the skills of computer networking and to teach them to evaluate the databases and make them work most effectively," says Kleiner. He likens his class to one in film criticism, noting his students will become expert critics of online services.

One of the course requirements is to keep an online journal. Students not only write of their electronic experiences but also critique what they see. These journals are stored online in full text in the Whole Earth Forum Data Library 1.

The course also is an adventure for the instructor. "This is still a new medium, and I am only beginning to realize how much skill is involved in using it. This class is a way of finding out how much of that skill can be imparted in training," says Kleiner, a seven-year veteran of the electronic world.

Training of this sort is not required, "at least not in the same sense that a surgeon needs to go to medical school," Kleiner says. "Most people learn to use electronic databases by simply absorbing it while online. My students are looking for things they could not learn by doing it themselves: learning shortcuts to the systems, a perspective that goes beyond using just one system, putting the technology into practice and learning to critique something while experiencing it for the first time."

For more information, contact Art Kleiner in the Whole Earth Forum (GO WEC). His CompuServe User ID number is 76703,436.

High-Tech Teddies Prepare for Duel

With Christmas just around the corner, prepare yourself for the Great Battle of the Talking Teddy Bears.

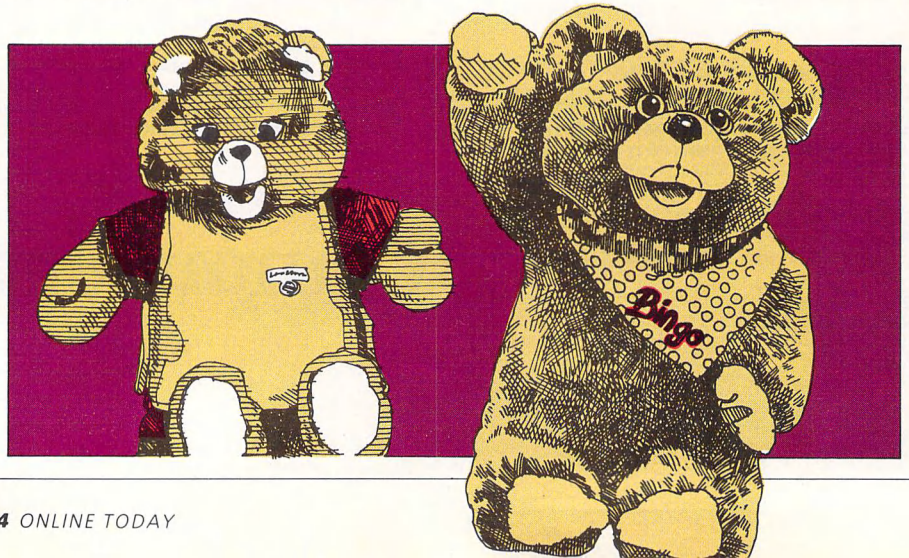
In one corner of the ring stands the world champion blabbing bear: the one, the only, Teddy Ruxpin. But wily ol' Ruxie now has a worthy challenger in the form of one Bingo Bear, a creation of Hasbro Inc., the Pawtucket, R.I., toy giant.

Bingo is going to beat the stuffing out of Ruxie, according to Neil Friedman, Hasbro's vice president of marketing. Unlike Ruxie, who tells stories while kids passively listen, Bingo is interactive. "You have to play with Bingo to make him talk," explained Friedman. "He also is softer and lighter than Ruxpin," he added.

Hasbro is planning to produce enough Bingos to take over a medium-sized midwestern city — some 600,000 of the $70 yakking, singing, squeezable delights. The company also is working on a $3 million ad campaign, just in case Bingo's own personal word-of-mouth isn't sufficient.

Want more details? Visit your local toy store or call Hasbro at 401/726-4100.

— John Edwards



States Cool Toward Computer Crime Laws

Computer crime legislation may be a hot topic on Capitol Hill, but it now seems to be less of a state concern than it was only a short time ago.

"A year or two ago, most states did not have any laws on the books that specifically applied to the misuse of computer equipment, manipulation of data or unauthorized entry into databases," says Ed Feigenbaum, director of legal affairs for the Lexington, Ky., based Council of State Governments.

"The states realized they either didn't have any legislation at all or what they did have wouldn't cover what was happening," he says.

Several states, most notably California, Florida, Wisconsin, Virginia, Georgia, Minnesota, New York and Massachusetts, rushed to enact statutes covering high-tech crimes.

Based on the experience of these states, the Videotex Industry Association has drafted a comprehensive computer crime act that the Council of State Governments has distributed in its 1986 *Suggested State Legislation*, a compendium of statutes the Council views as exemplary. The volume is distributed free of charge to all state governments.

This measure is directed toward such computer crimes and abuses as using a computer to defraud an organization; alter, damage or destroy hardware, software or a network; gain unauthorized access to data; and illegally copy computer software.

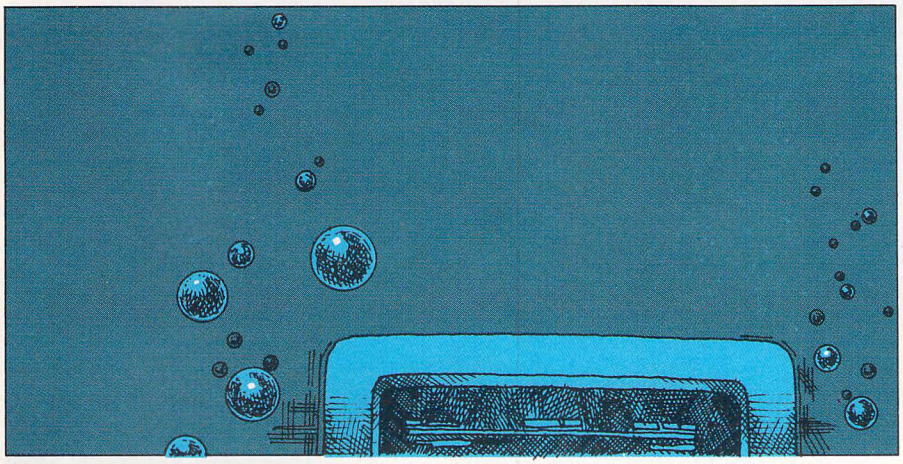
The measure is needed on the state level because the opportunities for computer-related crime are so great, according to the Videotex Industry Association.

The suggested legislation calls for violators to be subject to criminal prosecution and punishment.

The Council of State Governments is a joint agency created, supported and directed by all state governments. It conducts research on state programs and problems and maintains an information service for state officials.

Free copies of the suggested legislation are available to state officials upon request. For information, contact the Council of State Governments, Iron Works Pike, P.O. Box 11910, Lexington, KY 40578; 606/252-2291.

— Cathryn Conroy



Microcomputer Takes to the Water

How many times have you heard this? You're at a users group meeting, your neighborhood computer store or an industry trade show, and somebody pipes up and says, "What this business really needs is a good underwater microcomputer."

Well, Bob Pedan, of Deakin University in Victoria, Australia, has developed a computer with a waterproof display, a waterproof keyboard, a waterproof central processing unit — waterproof everything! This thing is so darn waterproof, even the software bugs can throw away their water wings. Plastic encapsulation keeps things dry.

The computer isn't designed for people who like to play *Flight Simulator* in the shower. It is made for divers who scout shipwrecks, underwater pipelines and other dangerous "Sea Hunt"-type chores.

The lightweight system mounts onto the diver's back, providing navigational bearings for both the diver and any objects he or she may encounter. A 4.7- by 2-inch keyboard is activated by infrared reflections from the diver's fingers. The display unit, worn on the diver's wrist, provides messages up to 18 characters long.

The first field tests of the unit are expected to take place by the end of this year.

— John Edwards

Company Crosses Language Barrier

An advantage of computer telecommunications is that, when dealing with other countries, we no longer are dependent on crackling telephone lines or mail delivery with delays of a week to 10 days.

This is a boon for businesses wanting to expand beyond the United States. There is only one problem: language.

Business executives needing help in translation can turn to GlobaLink, a new multilingual online translation service based in Oakton, Va.

Using electronic mail, GlobaLink provides expert translations worldwide in as little as four hours. Translations are available for English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Japanese (Romaji), Arabic and Russian.

Once GlobaLink receives a document for translation, a language specialist reviews it and then electronically routes it to one of the certified professional translators in the GlobaLink network, many of whom live in foreign countries and are aware of current idioms and technical jargon.

Founded about a year ago, GlobaLink receives items for translation through electronic mail and telex services, including CompuServe, as well as facsimile or modem. A flat rate of three cents per character plus $4 for handling is charged for all translations.

The company has translated such documents as a news release announcing a major medical breakthrough, advertising copy presenting technical facts about plastic materials for the automotive industry and letters from various state governors seeking foreign companies to open branches in their states.

CompuServe subscribers can access GlobaLink via an EasyPlex message to CompuServe User ID number 70007,1616 or through The Electronic Mall (type GO GLO) GlobaLink is located at 2911 Hunter Mill Rd., Suite 203, Oakton, VA 22124; 703/281-5612.

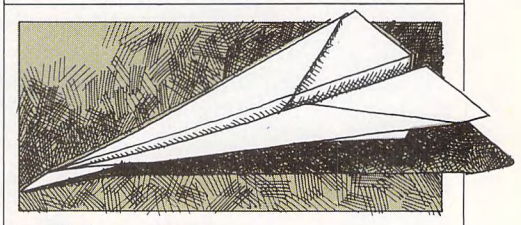
— Cathryn Conroy

Dvorak Overrated?

Just how good is Dvorak? No, not that guy who writes those **columns** with the **boldface** words. We're talking about the keyboard that looks like it was designed by someone who sniffs burning 8088 chips.

The Dvorak keyboard may be overrated, according to the *Office Systems Ergonomics Report*. *OSER*, in a special issue devoted entirely to keyboard ergonomics, notes that Dvorak users don't enter data any faster than the QWERTY-type keyboard typists. Claims of 15- to 50-percent higher productivity levels by Dvorak users can't be substantiated, noted *OSER*.

Don't believe it? Trust us, or send $30 to the Koffler Group, 3029 Wilshire Blvd., #200, Santa Monica, CA 90403; 213/453-1844, and they'll send you a copy of the publication.



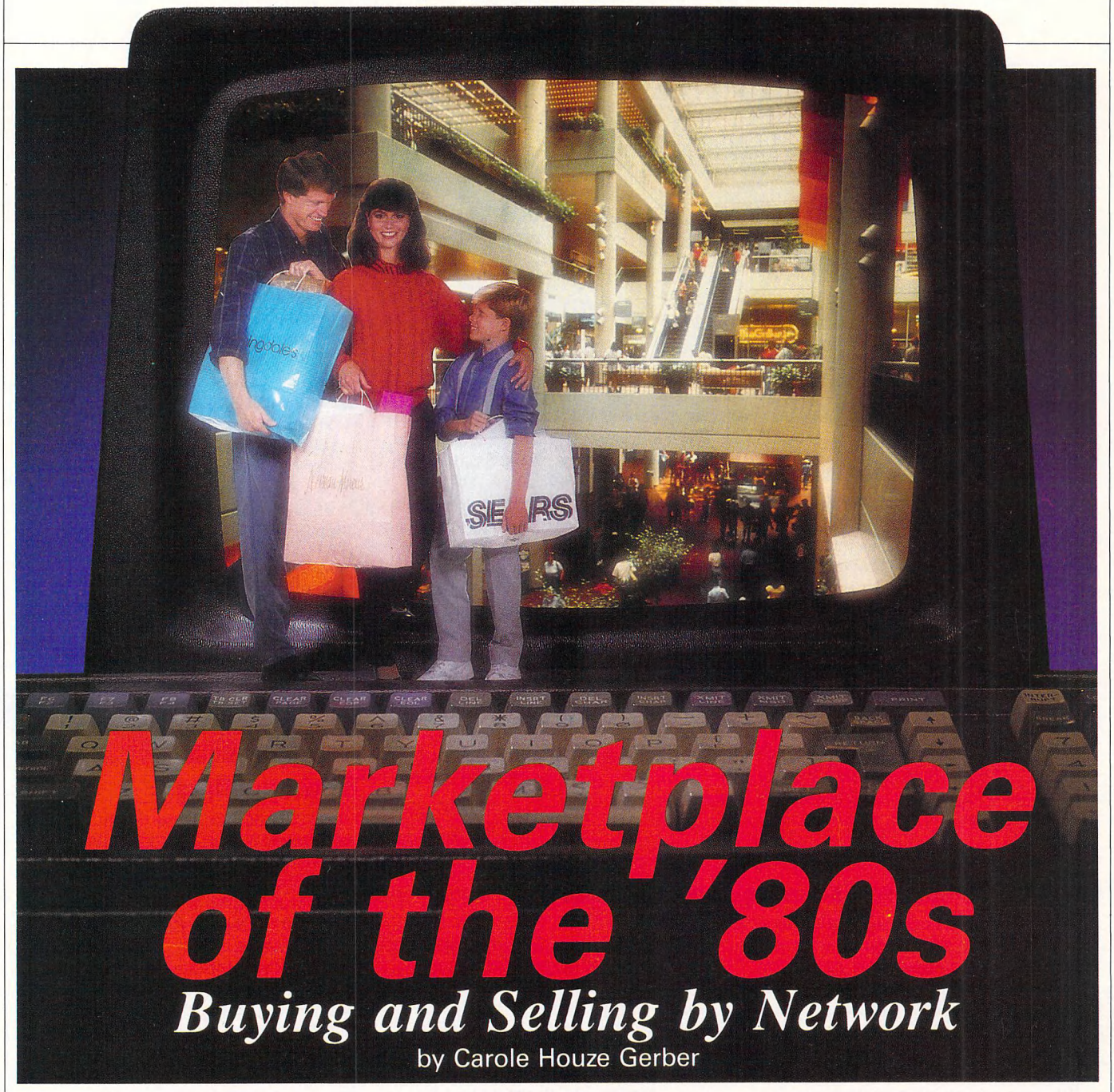
Taking Wing

Use your home computer to make a paper airplane? Sure, you just take your video display, cut along line A, fold at line B. Not quite. You use the paper templates provided by a software package published by Simon & Schuster Computer Software.

The Great International Paper Airplane Construction Kit contains over a dozen full-page paper airplane designs, from biplanes to space shuttles. The planes, most of which have been taken from the best-selling book of the same title, can be embellished on the wings and fuselage with aeronautical art. The library of aviation graphics can be used to create planes with insignias, logos, windows, engines, pilots and even flight attendants.

The Great International Paper Airplane Construction Kit has a suggested retail price of $39.95 (Apple Macintosh), $34.95 (Apple II family and IBM PC and compatibles) and $29.95 (Commodore 64). Further details are available from Simon & Schuster Computer Software, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020; 212/245-6400.

— John Edwards



Marketplace of the '80s

Buying and Selling by Network

by Carole Houze Gerber

Regardless of whether yours is a simple purchase or a multimillion dollar deal, all transactions share three common elements: a buyer, a seller, and the goods or services changing hands. The price of the item for sale is based not only on its absolute value to the buyer but also on the seller's overhead costs, such as rent, electricity and employees' salaries.

What would happen if these built-in costs could be drastically reduced or even eliminated? Mail-order merchants who asked that question years ago found the answer to be a profitable one. Now, businesses offering online merchandise and services through The Electronic Mall and Comp-u-store OnLine are receiving even more gratifying results.

"Online transactional services benefit both customers and merchants," says Cindy Morgan, a consultant to CompuServe's Electronic Mall shopping service. "Customers choose from a wide array of quality products and services, often at great savings — from small items such as books to major appliances, as well as travel packages, stocks and insurance services. Merchants, regardless of their size, receive equal access to customers — and they are not burdened by costs for overhead and salesclerks."

Online Sales Are Brisk

Take the case of Simon David (GO SIM), a small, Dallas-based specialty shop featuring everything from chocolate truffles to rattlesnake meat. According to Jim Dawson, Simon David's vice president of information services, the decision to go online in 1985 was a sound one. "Online selling has been good," Dawson says. "It certainly broadened our customer base. Because people can't see the merchandise, you have to have a flair for writing descriptions of what is available."

Many merchants, from big stores such as Tiffany's (GO TIF) to small operators such as Carolina Health & Fitness (GO HF), offer free catalogs to supplement their online word pictures. "People already have a mental picture of what a solid color Oxford-cloth shirt looks like," explains Electronic Mall Consultant Cindy Morgan. "But they need a visual aid in deciding on a china pattern. We've found brand-name merchandise sells well because people know exactly what they are getting. People also like to order unusual items, such as gourmet foods that they can't get at their local stores."

Among other types of unusual — some might say bizarre — items on The Electronic Mall are liqueur toothpaste from Neiman-Marcus, a Gumby watch from Sears Roebuck and Co., and a 14-K gold toothpick from Executive Engraver. "There is definitely a market for these types of items as well as the thousands of more conventional products," Morgan says. "And people enjoy using technology to order them."

Merchants make use of the technology, too, in ways traditional storekeepers might envy. "The online shopping services enable merchants to easily track the effectiveness of their advertising messages," says Mary Kay Fenner, manager of market research at CompuServe. "It is easy for merchants to see when customers shop in the online stores and to find out precisely what they buy. This quick feedback means special promotions and sales can be put online almost instantaneously to respond to customers' needs."

Window shopping for gift ideas: *Zacks*

Shoppers Value Convenience, Service

Research conducted by Dr. Wayne Talarzyk, chairman of the marketing department at Ohio State University, showed that convenience is another reason shoppers are attracted to online shopping services. Round-the-clock, year-round access appeals to CompuServe subscribers, many of whom are professionals with busy lifestyles. Another advantage of online shopping is the speed with which product features can be quickly researched and compared.

Such online shopping-related services as The Electronic Mall's Seasonal Gift-Giving Guide also appeal to people in a hurry. "The Guide saves shoppers time by providing suggestions for finding that perfect gift," says Mary F. Zacks, CompuServe product marketing specialist. "We do the window shopping and browsing for you — this helps eliminate the indecisiveness that makes shopping difficult for some people."

And although online shopping and related services still constitute only a tiny part of the overall retail market, the impact is certainly not insignificant. Once people experience online shopping they usually become repeat customers, says Joan Lewis, manager of interactive services for American Express. "New online shoppers tend to start out buying lower priced items," she says. "Most are pleased with the service and the ease of shopping and go on to increase the size of their purchases."

Electronic Mall customers are an affluent group who buy "the most advanced, sophisticated, and newest products and services," according to CompuServe's Fenner. She says a recent survey comparing Mall shoppers' demographics with those of total US households turned up some interesting information.

Unlike traditional shoppers, the overwhelming majority of CompuServe subscribers — a whopping 96 percent — are males who appear to be enamored of high-tech products. More than a third, for example, own phone answering machines, compared with only 5 percent of total US households. More than 10 percent own compact disc players, and 75 percent have videocassette recorders. Among total US households, only 1 percent and 23 percent, respectively, own

How to Order Gifts at The Electronic Mall

Electronic Mall customers use shopping carts, but they are electronic, of course. Each time you enter a Mall store a shopping cart — in the form of a personal order file — is opened for you, according to Mary F. Zacks, CompuServe product manager.

You can browse the online stores of more than 100 merchants covering 15 product departments. If you decide to order something while you're in a "store," just type the letter "O" to put the item into your electronic shopping cart.

This process is repeated for each item you select. To shop at different stores, type the GO command for the next store you wish to visit. Financial and travel services also are available through The Electronic Mall.

If you change your mind before checking out, you can cancel the entire order by typing EXIT. If you wish to complete the transactions — whether your cart is filled with items from one store or dozens — type CHECKOUT. This tells the computer you are ready to stop shopping and pay for your purchases. Checkout will be followed by a series of prompts for such information as quantity, name, address and method of payment.

After you have supplied this information, you will have yet another chance to change the order before final processing of the transaction. Once these changes — if any — are made, you will receive another chance to review your total order and confirm that the order is correct. An order confirmation number verifies that the order is complete.

The order then is sent to the merchant's CompuServe mailbox so it can be retrieved and filled. You will receive confirmation of your order via EasyPlex. Delivery times vary depending on the merchants involved, but The Mall receives few complaints about service. Consider the comment of Electronic Mall customer M. Paul Ferris of Pound, Wis., who received his items in only five days: "No catalog had ever — and I mean ever — served me that quickly."

To access The Mall, type GO MALL at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

— *CHG*

disc players and VCRs. "Mall shoppers, whose average age is 34, are married, have a median income of $44,000 and use their computers more than 10 hours a week," says Fenner. "We're dealing with a high-buying audience."

Holidays Are Busy Online Seasons

Not surprisingly, the busiest time for online shops — between Thanksgiving and Christmas — mirrors the busy season for traditional stores. Online merchants respond to this heightened customer demand with special sales and other holiday promotions.

Special promotions planned for The Electronic Mall include rebates on connect time through the end of the year, and free connect time on designated days, beginning on Thanksgiving. Special sales and services by individual merchants, and a Mall Holiday database featuring holiday recipes and contests, and various gift-giving guides also will be featured. For complete information on the Mall's Christmas promotion, see the Update section of this issue.

"We are planning a number of online specials during the holiday season," says Cynthia Duff, Comp-U-Card International's director of corporate communications. "Information is available online and in our monthly newsletter."

A successful Christmas tree-ordering service offered last year by American Express will make a comeback this year, according to American Express' Joan Lewis, who ordered her own tree through the service.

"It is a one-price charge, regardless of where the tree is delivered," Lewis explains. "The tree is guaranteed fresh, and mine was lovely — six feet tall and it came with its own stand."

Like other merchants' offerings, categories of products and services such as travel, financial and credit cards services available through American Express ADVANCE will be expanded during the holidays, Lewis reports.

Whether you are looking for such traditional items as books, records and clothing, or extraordinary gifts such as live lobsters or balloon bouquets, CompuServe's 24-hour online shopping services can help put joy — and savings — into your family's holiday season.

Carole Houze Gerber is a contributing editor of Online Today. *Her CompuServe User ID number is 70007,1215.*

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Online Credit Authorization Helps Prevent Fraud

Most store owners will tell you their biggest credit risk is not the flashy character who charges a diamond pinky ring on a stolen credit card. Instead, more than half of all fraudulent credit card use comes from a steady stream of common thieves making transactions of $50 or less.

Most of these losses occur, according to Paul Steger, CompuServe's marketing manager for communications services, because many merchants are not required to verify by phone cardholders' ownership and balances on small transactions to get an authorization for a purchase. "But with CompuServe's electronic credit card authorization service available for VISA, American Express, Bank One, Telecheck Southwest and others in more than 250 major retail markets, we are on the way to eliminating this problem," says Steger. "Banks and consumers both benefit because electronic card authorization puts the brakes on fraudulent card use."

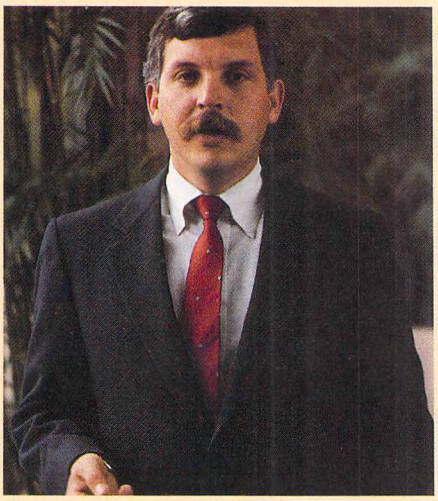
Here's how electronic point-of-service authorization works: The sales clerk passes a credit card through a specially equipped POS terminal that reads the magnetic strip on the back of the card. Because the terminal reads the magnetic strip instead of the card number, altered, embossed cards still will be detected. The terminal then automatically calls up the CompuServe network. CompuServe links the terminal with the bank or the bank credit card processor's data files.

At this point, the information read by the POS terminal is electronically routed and checked against computer records of actual credit availability, as well as records of lost and stolen cards. After a quick, thorough scan of the data files, a response either approving or denying the purchase is immediately transmitted back to the merchant's terminal.

"The whole procedure takes less time — about 20 seconds — than it takes the consumer to write a check," Steger explains. "CompuServe's distributed network routes the authorization call immediately to the appropriate database — unlike other systems requiring the call to be routed first to a central switching facility where bottlenecks can occur during busy periods — especially on the day after Thanksgiving or the week before Christmas. The network-supported POS terminal also can be used to validate customers' identification for cashing checks."

Lambert Franklin, regional sales manager for VISA Point-of-Service Transaction Systems, says the POS link with CompuServe has provided the speedy verification merchants and customers need. "Neither the consumer nor the merchant appreciates delays in the checkout lines," Franklin remarks. "The special software CompuServe designed significantly reduces time at the dial-up terminal by eliminating the need for a logon normally required in a packet network. Just as credit cards have developed in response to consumer needs, so are POS systems developing to meet merchant and consumer needs."

Clark Woodford, CompuServe's vice president of telecommunications services, says CompuServe wants to attract more clients by making the authorization process even faster and easier.



Cutting fraudulent credit cases: *Steger*

"Presently, only about 20 to 25 percent of the retail business is equipped for electronic authorization," Woodford says. "There is plenty of room for growth, and we expect that percentage to triple or quadruple within the next few years."

— *CHG*

How to Survey a Forum

In the world of dial-up computer services, CompuServe's many forums are the envy of the crowd. The information provided, the help given and the esprit de corps found in most of them cannot be duplicated elsewhere.

Sometimes new subscribers are hesitant about going through the "front door" of an unknown forum. The reasons are many but perhaps one of the biggest blockades is finding out what a forum is all about.

Never fear! There's a system for you.

We are not talking about spending hours in a forum, reading every message and examining the database files one at a time. This is a quick, simple method of learning a lot about a forum in a few minutes.

You can find the current list of public forums by typing FIND FORUMS at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service. The list will give you the name of the forum and the GO command needed to reach it.

When you arrive at a forum's "front door" for the first time, you will see a menu that looks something like this:

VISITOR'S MENU
1 Membership Information
2 Forum Administrators
3 Instructions
4 Visit *** Forum
5 Join *** Forum

Here is where your survey should begin. Most forum administrators spend considerable time writing and posting the bulletins you will find by selecting Options 1 or 2. The membership information bulletin will tell you in general terms what the forum is about and if the forum is public. If there are special requirements for joining the forum or if there is a surcharge for accessing the forum, you will learn about it in this bulletin. Select Option 1 and press the Return key for the bulletin.

Once you scroll to the end of the membership information bulletin, you will see the Visitor's Menu again. This time, choose Option 2 and press the Return key to see a bulletin about the forum administrators. This bulletin not only lists administrators' names but also usually includes their CompuServe User ID numbers and their qualifications for running the forum.

Option 3 — instructions — is a generic bulletin that appears on the Visitor's Menus of all forums. It will acquaint you with the way forums are structured, but you need read it only in one forum.

Next comes a decision: Should you join the forum? A public forum with no prerequisites for joining commits you to nothing. Your name and CompuServe User ID number appear on a membership list but only the forum administrator can check it.

If you decide to join, you will be asked to give your name. Some forums require that you give your first and last name.

Once you complete the sign-up procedure, another bulletin is likely to scroll by. This is the short bulletin that usually gives notice about current activity in the forum. It is a further indication of what the forum administrator and members are doing in the forum.

If you are a new subscriber, you will probably see the Function Menu after the short bulletin. Type B and press the Return key at the end of the Function Menu to see a list of bulletins:

1 Short
2 Regular
3 Conference
4 Data Library
5 Membership Information
6 Sysop Roster

You already have read bulletins 1, 5 and 6. Option 2 (Regular) displays a bulletin that usually gives more detailed information about the forum.

When you return to the Bulletin Menu, Option 3 (Conference) will take you to a bulletin on any scheduled forum conferences and what they are about. Option 4 is a bulletin about how the data libraries are organized and what they contain.

By pressing the Return key at the bottom of the Bulletin Menu, you will be taken back to the Function Menu where you can continue your survey of the forum. Although it is not listed on the Function Menu, by typing SN at the prompt and pressing the Return key, you can display the names of the public sections on the forum. This will give you more information about how the message board is organized. Pressing the Return key at the end of this list returns you to the Function Menu.

Here is another command you won't find on the Function Menu, but it is one that is indispensable for finding out what the forum members are talking about on the message board. The command is RTN. It means "Read the message Threads, starting with the Newest you haven't read." Reading the message board in this way means all messages in a subject "thread" will be grouped together, almost like reading the transcript of a conference in which a topic is advanced and discussed before moving to a new one.

At the end of each message you will see "Enter command, N for next message or <CR> for menu!" Typing N and pressing the Return key will take you to the next message in the thread.

When you reach the end of one thread, the system automatically takes you to the next thread to read the same way.

When you have read enough, type T and press the Return key at the prompt to get back to the Function Menu, then type EX and press the Return key to leave the forum.

There! You've done it. You've surveyed the forum quickly and efficiently with a minimum of time and money involved. You are ready to decide if that forum is for you.

David Peyton is a co-author of How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe. *His CompuServe User ID number is 76703,144.*

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BUY AND SELL STOCKS

Our Tickerscreen Direct Order Entry System is the First Commercial Application of the Data Encryption Standard.

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For A Free Brochure
On CompuServe
GO TKR
In The Electronic Mall
GO MU
Or Call Toll Free
(800) 223-6642
In New York
(212) 687-0705
Modem 5:00 PM - 9:00 AM
24 Hours Weekends
(212) 986-1660

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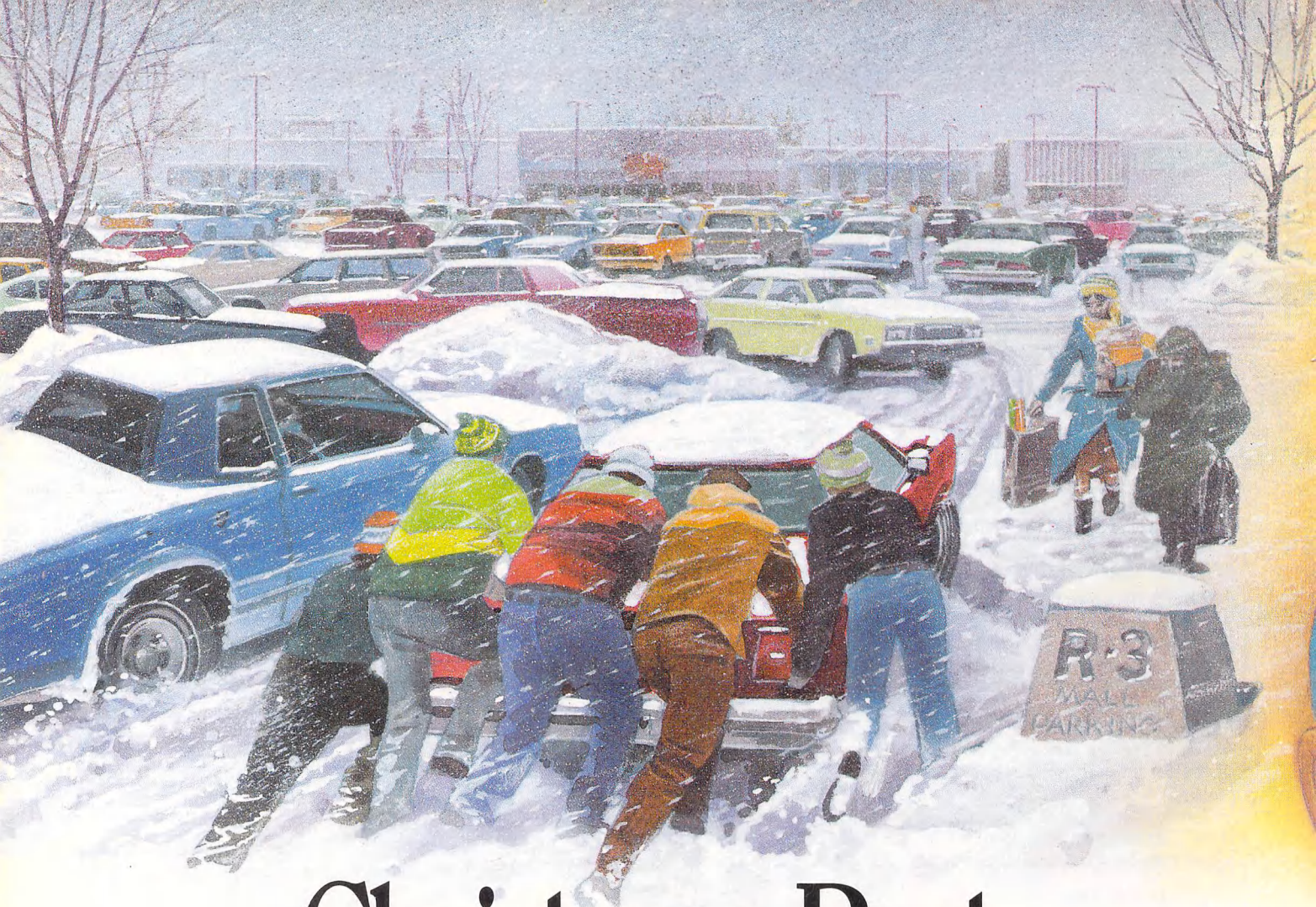
NY, NY 10016

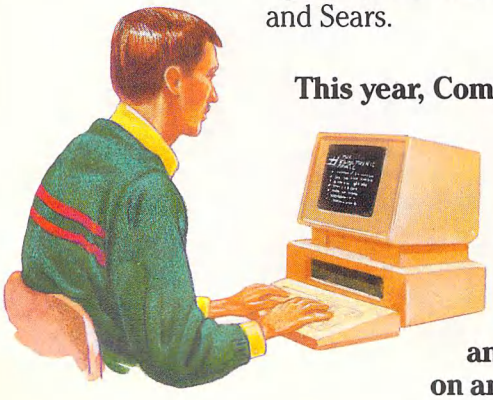
GO EBB or circle 11 on the Reader Service Form.



Christmas Past.

Holiday shop conveniently in the comfort

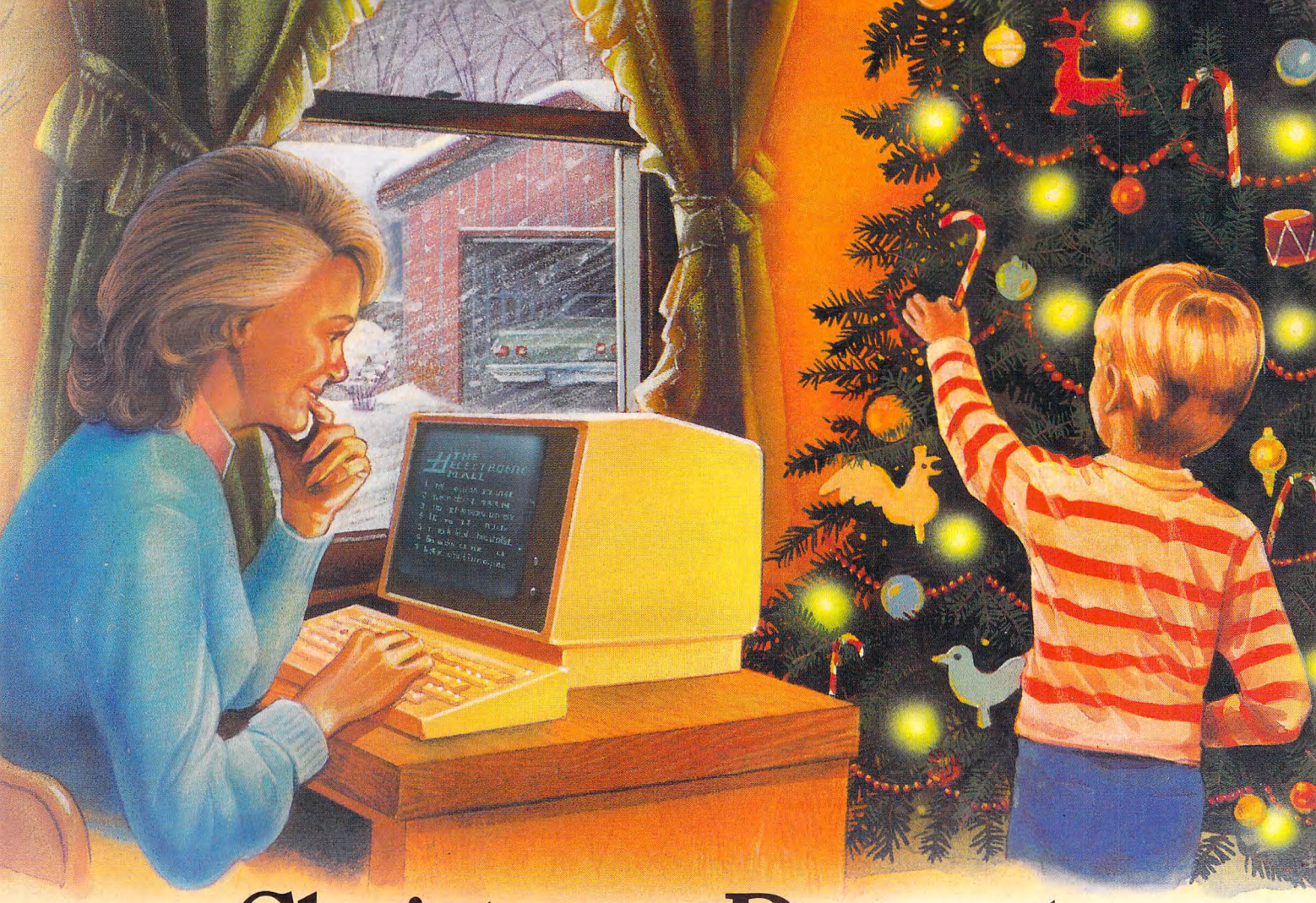
Fighting Christmastime crowds can turn the happiest of holidays into one big headache. That's why CompuServe and the merchants in THE ELECTRONIC MALL got together to bring you Holiday Bazaar '86—a fun and convenient way to shop. Without ever leaving home, you can buy online at famous stores like Bloomingdale's, Neiman-Marcus, Tiffany's and Sears.



This year, CompuServe has a special gift for ELECTRONIC MALL shoppers. From November 1 through December 7, any purchase(s) on any day totaling $50.00 or more qualify for $5.00 FREE connect time. Plus, connect time on Thanksgiving Day and the day after is free.

From software to sportswear, toys to tools and flowers to fruits, Holiday Bazaar '86 has gifts that are guaranteed to please everyone on your list. Plan your visits department by department, including stops in Apparel & Accessories, Books, Computing, Gifts & Gourmet, Home & Leisure, Merchandise & Electronics, Premium Merchants and Records & Movies. You're sure to find something just right for every member of the family.

In addition to fabulous gift selections, Holiday Bazaar '86 features some unique services you won't find anywhere



Christmas Present.

of CompuServe's ELECTRONIC MALL.™

else. The **Holiday Gift Giving Guide** offers hundreds of gift ideas, organized by category. So if you're puzzled over the perfect gift for Peter or Pamela, the Gift Giving Guide can provide you with clues.

For quick communication with the North Pole, **Talk to Santa.** The jolly ol' elf himself will be available to receive letters from kids, or to help puzzled adults. If you're at a loss over a special gift for someone, leave a message with Santa, and he'll get back to you (through EasyPlex™) with just the right gift suggestions. And while you're online, be sure to check out **Holiday Hotline** for weekly updates on new merchandise, events and special promotions, including **Mistletoe on the Mall.**

This Christmas, save your sanity and shop in the mall —CompuServe's ELECTRONIC MALL. No parking, no waiting, no hassle. Free connect time on Thanksgiving Day and the day after, plus connect time credits. THE ELECTRONIC MALL. A Christmas present for you . . . from your friends at CompuServe.

THE ELECTRONIC MALL

P.O. Box 20212
5000 Arlington Centre Blvd., Columbus Ohio 43220

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Happy Holidays from The Mall

Put on your favorite Christmas album or compact disc. Pour yourself an eggnog or set out a plate of Christmas cookies. You now are ready to start your holiday shopping. With nearly 100 stores — from the nation's leading retailers to specialty shops — The Electronic Mall has nearly everything you need for a festive holiday season.

Need a Christmas tree? See American Express (GO AXM). They'll deliver a Highland Fraser Fir right to your door. Grown in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, each tree averages 6 feet and includes a stand ready to be attached.

To decorate that tree, visit Neiman-Marcus (GO NM) where you can choose from an assortment of nostalgic and modern ornaments. For evergreen wreaths, poinsettias and holiday floral arrangements, visit Walter Knoll Florist (GO WK) or Fifth Avenue Shopper (GO FTH).

Planning a Christmas feast? See Simon David first (GO SIM). Selections include a Simon David smoked turkey, an Edwards Virginia ham and choice sirloin steaks. For an aristocratic holiday meal consider an assortment of wild game fowl, including two pheasant, two squabs, four quail and a box of wild rice.

Whether it is a tree to trim, holly to hang or a turkey to stuff, you can probably find what you need at The Mall. You

APPAREL/ACCESSORIES

APC	Apparel Concepts for Men
ATH	Athlete's Outfitters
CA	Casual Tee's
LH	L'Eggs/Hanes Outlet
MJ	Milkins Jewelers
BAG	Woodstock Leather Co.

AUTO

AMS	AMS/Oil Dealer
ATB	American Tire Buyers
BU	Buick Magazine
CHV	Chevy Showroom

BOOKS

DII	Christian Book Store
MH	McGraw-Hill Book Company
MER	Mercury House
WB	Waldenbooks

CAREER/SELF-HELP

TDG	Teledata*Guide
WS	Wayside Systems

COMPUTING

CE	Computer Express
CL	Conroy-LaPointe
DSC	Discount Computers
HMK	Hallmark Color Mail
HTH	The Heath Company
IS	Investment Software
DSK	1-800-Floppys
MM	Marymac Industries Inc.
MO	Misco Computer Supplies
SR	Sears, Roebuck & Co.
SDA	Software Discounters of America
WOC	World of Computers

FINANCIAL

BNB	Beneficial National Bank
CN	Colonial National Bank USA
DWR	Dean Witter Reynolds
EL	Equitable Life
MU	Max Ule Discount Brokerage
SLG	Sun Life Group

GIFTS/GOURMET

AK	Alaska Teleshopper
COF	Coffee Emporium
EX	Executive Engraver
FTH	Fifth Avenue Shopper
FFS	Florida Fruit Shippers
HI	Hawaiian Isle
HH	Hobbit Hole/Wyandotte Wines
LM	Lincoln Manor Baskets
NUT	Morrow's Nut House
SIM	Simon David
WK	Walter Knoll Florist

HOME/LEISURE

CC	Cosmic Concepts
GG	The Game Getters Inc.
MAO	Music Alley Online
RR	Rin Robyn Pool & Patio
VCS	Vacuum Advance

MERCHANDISE/ELECTRONICS

AA	American Airlines Catalog
EGS	Electronic Gadget Store
ELM	World of Electronics
NCS	Nationwide Catalog Shopper
SAV	Savings Scan
SR	Sears, Roebuck & Co.
SUN	Sunland Camera
XDM	Xerox Direct Marketing

ONLINE SERVICES

EF	EF Hutton
GLO	Globalink
NN	NewsNet
OA	Official Airline Guides
VL	Videolog

PERIODICALS

CW	CW Communications
DJ	Dow Jones & Co.
ME	EBSCO Magazine Entree
ECO	ECOPRESS
US	USA TODAY

PREMIUM MERCHANTS

AXM	American Express
BL	Bloomingdale's By Mail
NM	Neiman-Marcus
TIF	Tiffany & Co.

RECORDS/MOVIES

CF	CBS/Fox Video
EMC	Express Music CDs
MV	Magic Castle Video
RC	RCA Direct Marketing
RW	Record World

SPORTS/HEALTH

HF	Carolina Health & Fitness
VM	VitaMenagerie Discount Vitamins

TRAVEL

AF	Air France
AT	Ameropa Travel

also will find hundreds of gift ideas for everyone on your list. A sampling of suggestions from many of The Mall's merchants is offered on the following pages of this magazine.

Free Connect Time Planned

Thanksgiving is known for feasts, friends and football. For CompuServe subscribers this year, it also means two days of free connect time in The Electronic Mall.

To celebrate the traditional start of the holiday shopping season, Mall connect time will be free from midnight Wednesday, Nov. 26, until midnight Friday, Nov. 28. Mark your calendars now and plan to gather friends and family around your personal computer for a holiday shopping spree.

Mistletoe on The Mall

Every week, Walter Knoll Florist will hang an electronic mistletoe somewhere in The Mall. If you're the first person to find the mistletoe and send an EasyPlex message with the location to Walter Knoll, you will receive a big chocolate kiss.

Visit Walter Knoll for details. And while you are there, you might want to order some live mistletoe, decorated for the holidays, and guaranteed to last through New Year's Eve. GO WK.

Shop Specialty Catalogs

Many Mall merchants let you order their holiday catalogs online. American Express (GO AXM) and Bloomingdale's (GO BL) are among the merchants with special holiday books full of Christmas gift ideas. You can order Sears, Roebuck and Co.'s 1986 Wish Book (GO SR) or Neiman-Marcus' famous holiday catalog (GO NM).

You'll also find many specialty print catalogs available online. For the hobbyist on your list, check into Heath Co.'s free Heathkit Catalog (GO HTH). Simon David's color catalog offers gourmet goodies (GO SIM). You'll find custom-designed leather goods in Woodstock Leather's free catalog (GO BAG). Express Music CDs' catalog (GO EMC) features albums, cassettes and compact discs. Finally, you'll want to browse through Tiffany & Co.'s holiday catalog (GO TIF).

— Cindy Morgan

Holiday Gift Guide Offers Suggestions

To assist you with your gift-giving dilemmas, Holiday Bazaar '86 offers an electronic Gift Giving Guide with more than 300 ingenious solutions. You'll discover everything from a genuine mink teddy bear to gourmet game meats. There is something for everyone. Your holiday shopping this year could begin and end at The Mall. Type GO MALL and select the "Gift Giving Guide" from The Mall's Holiday Bazaar main menu.

The Electronic Mall's Gift Giving Guide

Pearls and Other Pleasures — *gifts for the ladies on your list.*

Not Just Ties and Cologne — *gifts for men and boys.*

Scrooge's Source — *gifts costing $10 and less.*

A Grand or Better — *gifts costing more than $1,000.*

Ghost of Christmas Past — *the best from bygone years.*

Eat, Drink and Be Merry — *pleasures for Christmas now.*

Ghost of Christmas Future — *the best of tomorrow — today.*

A Cornucopia for Kids — *gifts for little boys and girls.*

Toys for Teen-agers — *gifts for bigger boys and girls.*

Out-of-the-Ordinary Offerings — *ideas for the impossible-to-please person.*

For All You Do — *gifts for bosses, employees and business associates.*

Talk to Santa

If you're still perplexed about what to get someone or where to find something, you can talk to Santa via EasyPlex. Santa or one of his electronic elves will answer your questions, make gift suggestions and clue you in on the hottest gifts of the season.

UPDATE

Specialty Shops

The Mall includes dozens of specialty shops offering unique gift ideas for the holidays.

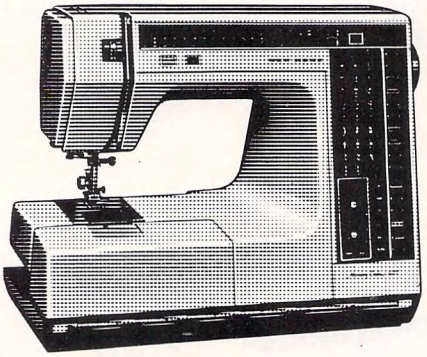
Alaska Teleshopper

Gift suggestions from Alaska Teleshopper include fossilized ivory scrimshaw, gold nugget and bezel necklaces, and agate wildlife paintings.

Consider sending a seafood gift pack of smoked salmon, salmon and halibut, or salmon fillets. For a gift guaranteed to be unexpected, choose a 3-foot bear totem pole. GO AK

Hawaiian Isle

At Hawaiian Isle you will find a variety of island gifts, including a double volcano candle, a men's or women's aloha shirt, paradise fragrances such as Wicked Wehine and White Ginger, Hawaiian orchid sprays and assorted macadamia nut chocolates. There is a Hawaiian Mother Goose for children. And for the guys, there is an Island Girls 1987 Calendar. GO HI



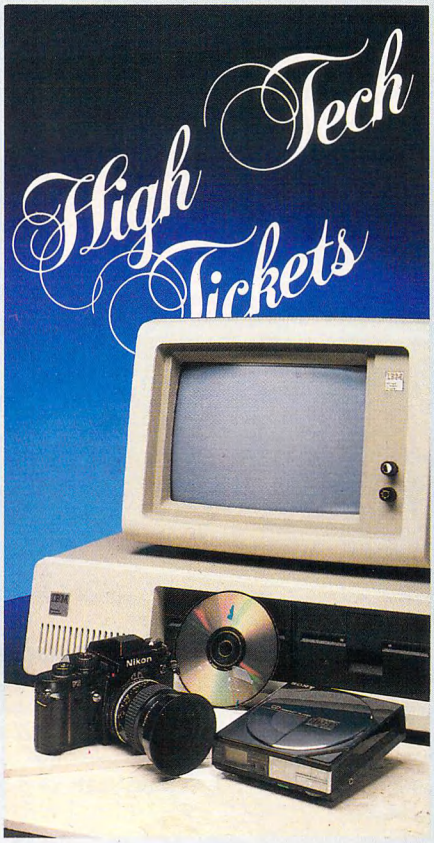
Vacuum Advance

Perhaps the most practical present you can give this year is a vacuum cleaner. At Vacuum Advance you'll find Eureka, Miele, Panasonic and Whirlpool vacuum cleaners.

Also featured online is The Memory Craft 6000, a sewing machine with a built-in memory function for almost every sewing option. GO VCS

Woodstock Leather

An extensive line of full-grain leather products is featured at this new Mall store. Duffle bags, day packs, belt carry-alls, jewelry rolls, classic handbags and envelope clutches are among the quality, hand-crafted items offered. The flat belt especially is recommended for holiday gifts. Woodstock Leather's exclusive close-fitting, flat design makes it an ideal belt for keys, currency, passport or wallet — a must for all travelers. GO BAG



Heathkit

Visit Heathkit and enter the world of kit-building. For the hobbyist or high-tech tinkerer on your list, you'll find more than 400 products in 16 categories, including amateur radio, computers, robots and stereos. A marine deluxe depth-sounder, a digital wall clock, a five-function weather station and a keyless door lock are among the product kits available. GO HTH

Music Alley Online

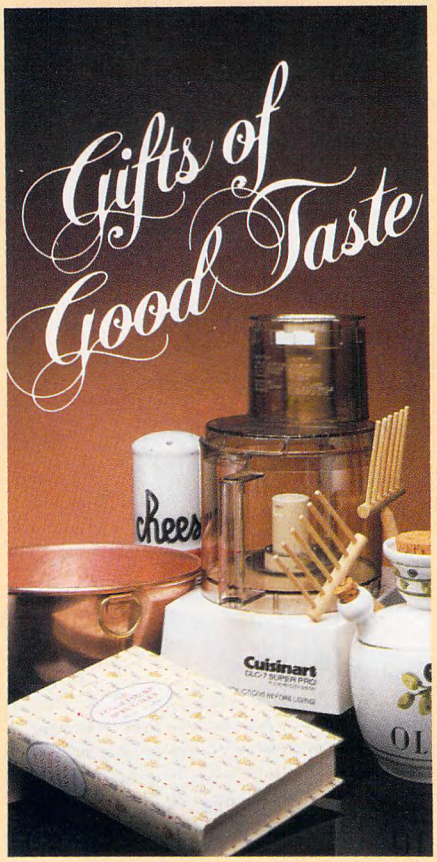
Specializing in quality music merchandise at discount prices, Music Alley Online offers a selection of keyboards, synthesizers, electric and acoustic guitars, power amps and mixers, music software and more. Yamaha, Korg, Ensonia, Casio, Sunn, Takamine, Boss and Fostex are among the brands available. GO MAO

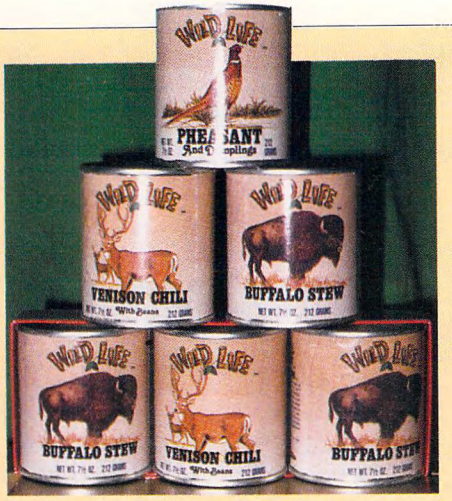
Sunland Camera

To find gifts for the shutterbugs on your list, shop at Sunland Camera. Sunland carries the latest photographic equipment from Canon, Nikon, Minolta, Pentax, Kodak, Polaroid and other companies. Browse the online catalog to select cameras, lenses, video and audio/visual equipment and camera gadgets. All products have official USA limited warranties. Batteries and film are included. GO SUN

World of Electronics

The World of Electronics has an online catalog of electronics and appliances. For the cook of the house, there is a food processor from Panasonic. It shreds, slices, blends, mixes, chops, grinds, purees and whips. Consider a Sharp portable microwave oven, a Spectrum radar detector or a Casio pocket color television set for someone on your list. The World of Electronics has high-tech toys for everyone. GO ELM





Simon David

The best little gourmet shop in Texas offers everything from gourmet meats to sweets. You can order veal, lamb or fillets, mammoth Texas pecans and chocolate truffles. Simon David's fruitcake is recommended for the holidays. And one of last year's most popular gifts — genuine rattlesnake meat — is available again. GO SIM

Coffee Emporium

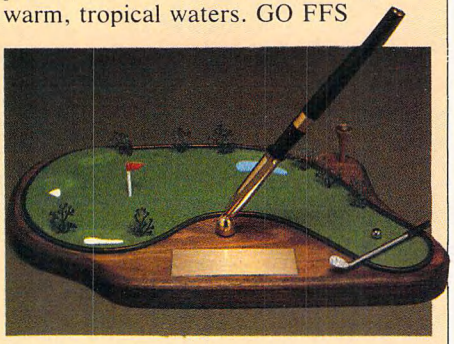
At Coffee Emporium you'll find a variety of gourmet coffees, including Italian expresso roast, Colombian supremo and Jamaican Blue Mountain. Choose from flavored and decaffeinated coffees or loose and bagged teas. Gift ideas include sampler packs and accessories such as a Melitta 10-cup coffeemaker, a coffee grinder and a Japanese iron teapot. GO COF

Apparel Concepts for Men

Apparel Concepts for Men offers quality, brand-name menswear at a substantial savings. Christmas gift suggestions for the men on your list include 100 percent Mongolian cashmere sweaters and vests, London Fog trench coats, and shirts by Arrow, Gant and Gitman. The Izod by Lacoste is available in a rainbow of colors. Choose shoes from Sperry Topsider, Bass, Timberland and other companies. GO APC

Florida Fruit Shippers

For fresh Florida citrus fruits by the bushel, three-quarter bushel, half bushel or one-quarter bushel, see Florida Fruit Shippers. The Presidential Gift Basket is full of the finest oranges, grapefruits and avocados. A large wicker tray of sun-ripened, dried fruit, a French canning jar of guava jelly and a bottle of exotic Japanese dressing come with the basket gift. Florida Fruit Shippers also offers fresh seafood from the warm, tropical waters. GO FFS



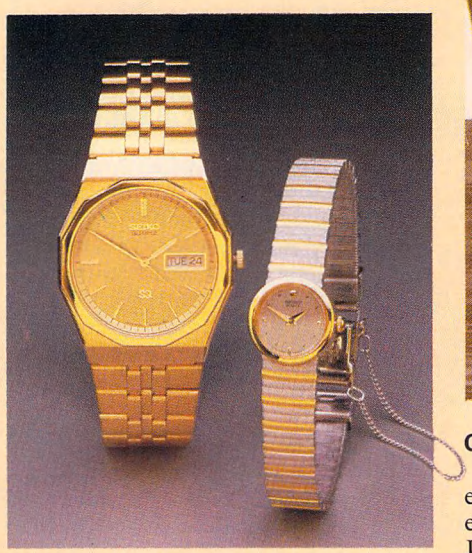
Executive Engravers

Visit Executive Engravers for distinctive gifts with a personal touch. When you purchase items at this store, you will receive free engraving in the type style of your choice (orders must be for six or more letters). Gift ideas include a Mulberry Hill ice bucket, a walnut jewelry chest, a walnut business card file and a glass wine set.

Executive Engravers also has items for stocking stuffers or for multiple gifts for clients and business associates. Consider a 14-K gold or sterling silver toothpick, a brass business card case or luggage tag, an executive pocket knife or "Money to Burn" note paper. GO EX

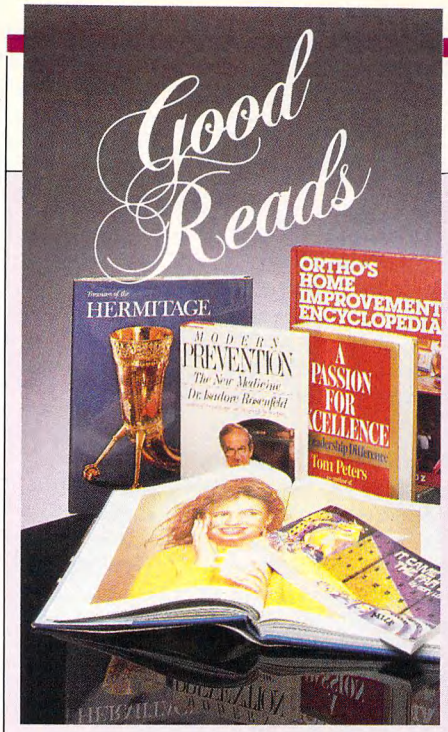
Hobbit Hole

Visit The Hobbit Hole for quality food and wine gifts. If there's a wine lover on your list, consider the Hobbit Hole's monthly wine box, a bisque wine chiller or a wine taster table. Cookware suggestions include the Chantry knife sharpener and the Calphalen cookware set. A tasty choice for computer users is the Hobbit Hole's 1-pound solid-chocolate computer. GO HH



Milkins Jewelers

At Milkins Jewelers you'll find treasures of gold, diamonds, pearls and other baubles. Surprise someone with a pearl necklace or birthstone ring or diamond earrings tucked inside a stocking. Consider a Rolex or Cyma watch for gift-giving. Milkins has an 18-K yellow-gold Hershey's Kiss charm, Swarvoski crystal and other gift ideas. A certified gemologist is available. GO MJ



Waldenbooks

Hundreds of books on topics ranging from business to antiques are available through Waldenbooks' online catalog. For children, consider giving a classic such as *Black Beauty*, *Heidi*, *The Little Engine That Could*, *Winnie the Pooh* or *The Nutcracker*. For the photographer there is *Ansel Adams: An Autobiography*. Give the cook *Craig Claiborne's Memorable Meals*. Waldenbooks also has a selection of video and audio cassettes. For sports fans there is *New York Mets: An American Era* (beta or VHS) and for fitness fans, *Jane Fonda's New Workout* (beta or VHS). Give a "Star Trek" fan one of more than a dozen of the original "Star Trek" episodes on a videocassette. GO WB

McGraw-Hill

McGraw-Hill's online catalog includes hundreds of titles in such categories as computers, software and programming; business and legal; and engineering and science. A new and recommended title is *Foiling the System Breakers*, an in-depth look at computer security and access control. Holiday and gift books also are available. Give a cat owner *The Ultimate Cat Catalog* or *The Pet's First Aid Book*. GO MH

Mercury House

Visit this San Francisco publisher's store for quality fiction and non-fiction. Todd Walton's new novel, *Night Train*, is especially recommended for holiday gift-giving. GO MER

The Christian Bookstore

For a selection of Bibles and Christian classics, visit The Christian Bookstore. Children's books ideal for gift-giving include *The Book of Jonah*, *Noah and the Ark and the Animals*, and *The Read-N-Grow Picture Bible*. Games and music gifts also are available through the online catalog. GO DII

Software Discounters of America

Software Discounters has hundreds of software packages for Commodore, Atari, Apple and IBM owners. Software especially for the holidays includes The Graphics Library Holiday Edition from Bröderbund and Jingle Disk from HiTech Expressions. With these programs, you can make your own Christmas cards and holiday music.

You'll also find games such as Bridge 4.0 and Grand Master Chess, a program with 10 skill levels. Microleague Baseball and Super Bowl Sunday are ideal programs for sports fans. Consider Perry Mason: The Case of the Mandarin Murder for mystery enthusiasts.

Don't forget to check Software Discounters' bargain basement, where every piece of software is less than $10. GO SDA

Computer Express

Visit Computer Express for software ranging from educational to entertainment to utilities, all for the Apple, Commodore, IBM and Apple Macintosh computers. Featured titles include Sylvia Porter's Financial Planner, Bank Street Writer and Mind Prober from Human Edge. GO CE

Record World

Browse Record World's online catalog of albums and cassettes. You can search by artist or album title in such categories as blues, classical, country/western, exercise, female vocalist, male vocalist, jazz, instrumental, popular, shows and vocal groups.

Record World also specializes in classic compact discs. There are more than 600 selections online, including works by Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Chopin, Copland, Mendelssohn and Mozart.

Express Music CDs

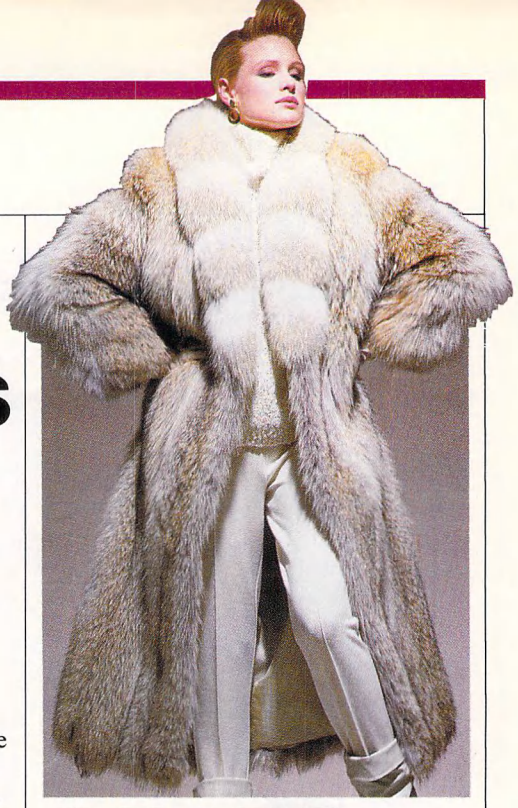
For compact discs browse Express Music CDs' online catalog of rock/pop, jazz, classical, top 10 and country recordings. You'll find works by such performers as Billy Joel, Talking Heads and ZZTop and classics by composers ranging from Bach to Tchaikovsky. GO EMC

Magic Castle Video

For movie cassettes and laser discs, visit Magic Castle Video. The online catalog of movies includes classics such as "African Queen" and recent favorites such as "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" and "M*A*S*H." For kids there's "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang." Selections for James Bond fans include "Diamonds Are Forever," "For Your Eyes Only" and "Goldfinger."

Magic Castle also has laser disc titles, including "Back to the Future," "Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai," "Citizen Kane," "King Kong" and "Witness." GO MV

Shop America's Leading Retailers



AMERICAN EXPRESS® TRAVEL RELATED SERVICES

American Express features a selection of merchandise for holiday gift giving. Visit American Express' Merchandise Shop and you'll discover children's toys, electronics, gifts and more.

For children there is a Whiz Kids' Super Desk; a Baja Beast Power Ride Dune Buggy; a Cabbage Patch Kid; and Teddy Ruxpin, a teddy bear perfect for the computer generation.

For the grownups on your list, you can select from electronics, including videocassette recorders, television sets, stereos and compact disc players. Gifts for the ladies include a silver fox jacket, a silver-plated vanity set and a Cartier watch. There is a mini-juke box for teens, and a leather attaché and Gucci cologne for men.

Gift selections suitable for all include fitness products (rowers, treadmills, exercycles); an aquarium; and Omnibott 2000, a personal robot that will serve you breakfast in bed.

Finally, if you want to really surprise someone, consider giving Franks a la Carte, a full-size hot dog cart that will delight the impossible-to-please adult or the entrepreneurial child.

To browse American Express' electronic Christmas catalog, type GO AXM.

Neiman-Marcus

This world famous specialty store, known for distinctive merchandise, offers dozens of gift solutions. Browse the online departments, including ladies' and men's apparel, jewelry, fragrances, intimate apparel and gourmet foods.

Here are a few of the gift ideas you'll discover:

- A mink eyeglass case — indulge in a fur coat for your eyeglasses. Made of natural ranch mink and lined in rich red velvet, it is an ideal gift for the lady who has everything.
- Polo shirts — accent your wardrobe with a classic, cotton shirt by Ralph Lauren. Available in solids and stripes.

- Christmas baskets — each hand-packed basket is full of delicacies to suit various tastes.
- Ladies cashmere sweaters — give the gift of luxury with Neiman-Marcus' quality cashmere sweaters in a rainbow of colors.
- Opium perfume — give the gift of mystery and enchantment with the exclusive scent of Opium perfume by Yves St. Laurent.

To access Neiman-Marcus, type GO NM.

SEARS

Sears has a special selection of toys, called "50 Toys for Any Season," that includes many of the newest, most popular items. There is a selection of robots ranging from $9.99 to $499.99.

Sears' "Furs for Her" offers gift ideas for ladies. Wrap someone in the sophisticated elegance of a mink, coyote, blue fox or other fur coat. Full-length, stroller and jacket styles are available. Coats are gift-boxed and include a garmet bag, oversize hanger and a form to order three personalized initials. All fur coats are at reduced prices through Dec. 31, 1986.

Also at Sears, you'll find an online gift-giving guide with more than 200 items. You can browse the listing by price (from less than $200 to less than $5), by product or by recipient. The guide includes everything from a three-and-a-half foot reproduction of an old cigar store Indian to a Mickey Mouse quartz watch for adults.

To shop Sears, Roebuck and Co. this holiday season, type GO SR.

bloomingdale's BY MAIL LTD

This year you can order gifts from Bloomingdale's holiday catalog online at The Mall. The Christmas catalog, full of luxurious indulgences, quirky gift ideas and sensible solutions, lets you shop one of the world's most renowned retailers at home.

Bloomingdale's also will feature some of its best Christmas gifts online in its Merchandise Showcase.

To browse Bloomies, type GO BL.

Vets Forum Sparks Debate

Topics Range from Terrorism to Nuclear Defense

Targeting misunderstandings: *Meeks addresses military, civilian issues*

CompuServe's Military Veterans' Services has widened its scope and opened much of its previously closed Veterans' Forum to all CompuServe subscribers. "We want to spark debate and discussion," says Dan Meeks, CompuServe product manager and a Vietnam Veteran. "The more opinions we get, the more we learn."

Participants can read and respond to message threads on controversial subjects ranging from nuclear defense to post-traumatic stress disorders. "It is amazing how many misunderstandings revolve around military topics," says Meeks.

Subscribers can learn more about these and other subjects through files in the data libraries. Files on veterans' benefits, Vietnam, the POW/MIA issue, terrorism/defense activities, today's military and other general information now are available to all subscribers. Sections dealing with personal adjustments, war stories and "vet-to-vet" discussions still are limited to veterans only, but files can be moved to the general area with the author's permission.

Online conferences are Thursdays at 9 p.m. EST. Guests have included Jan Scruggs, the force behind the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and Bobby Muller, president of the Vietnam Veterans of America. Ann Mills Griffith, chairman of the National League of POW/MIAs, and Richard Childross of the White House National Security Council are among scheduled speakers. Members also use conferences to discuss topics such as normalization of relations with Vietnam.

The Veterans Locator Service recently has been moved to the forum. To find a fellow veteran, use the forum's membership directory feature. Veterans can leave an entry for each duty station where they have served and search for others who served there.

Meeks says the Military Veterans Services are for all veterans. "There is a misconception that we are geared toward Vietnam veterans," he says. "Although most of our users are from that era, we want and need the input of other veterans."

The expanded service provides a military newsletter with the latest information related to veterans. Completely updated each month, topics include benefits, survivors' reunions and political happenings that might help or hinder veterans. Persons interested in POW/MIAs can access a special section for discussion about those still missing from the Vietnam War. Names of POW/MIAs, background information and recent updates on this topic are included.

The Special Features section contains book reviews, Veterans Administration information and organizational data. Here, vets and their families can learn about little-known sources of assistance.

Another area, Questions and Answers, provides subscribers with legal and governmental advice on veterans' issues. Individual feedback is available if the query is not found in the current database of commonly asked questions on loans, benefits and military discharges.

The Agent Orange information section provides details about the poisonous herbicide used in Vietnam to deprive the enemy of cover. The section contains the latest developments concerning the lawsuit against the chemical companies, the Ranch Hand study and ongoing research from the Centers for Disease Control. Subscribers also can ask questions about current studies and such queries are sent directly to the CDC.

The one-of-a-kind Vietnam Veterans Memorial feature has a searchable directory of those missing or killed during the war. By typing in the last name, branch of service, date of casualty, or home city and state, users can locate the panel number of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., on which the name appears. The directory also provides information on the person's branch of service, date of birth and casualty, rank, hometown, and more. This is especially useful when trying to locate the families of those listed on the memorial.

Even if you do not know the last name of the person, you can search on one or more items of information. The database is kept current and now includes the recent addition of 108 casualties verified by the US government. A history of the memorial also is available.

To access the Military Veterans Services, type GO VET at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

— *Sandra Gurvis*

In War and Peace

Vietnam Shaped Leader's Destiny

Dave Aldstadt seems to be a man whose destiny was shaped half a world away from his home in Columbus, Ohio. Even on his son's birthday, he's reminded of the time he spent in Vietnam with a US Army combat surveillance group. Dave Aldstadt is the forum administrator of CompuServe's Military Veterans Forum.

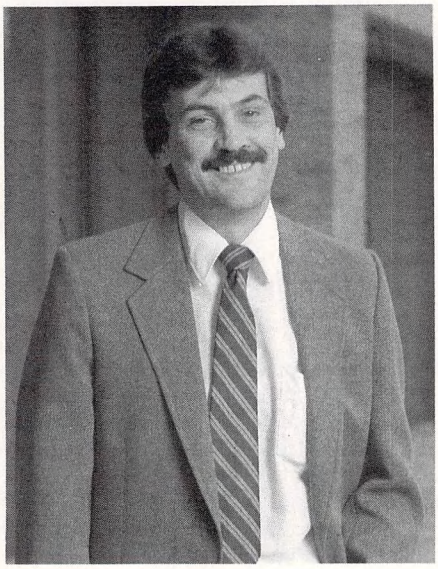
"My son was born while I was in Vietnam. They called me on the day he was born and said that I was the father of a baby boy born that morning. The only problem was that it was the 17th in the US and the 18th in Vietnam. It took me a year to figure out which day my son was actually born on and to this day I still get confused about it at times."

Dave is currently vice president for marketing, public relations and special projects at Mercy Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. And his firstborn son now is an 18-year-old honors freshman who attends Ohio State University. Dave's younger child, a daughter, is 15 and lives nearby with her mother. Now 39, and unmarried, Dave is affiliated with a number of veterans organizations. He also is involved with several public-sector activities that have earned him awards including the 1985 Columbus Dispatch Community Service Award for Humanitarian Service. His reputation as a veterans advocate is what got him involved with CompuServe and the Military Veterans Forum.

"Several years before I began working for Mercy Hospital, I became the executive director for the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program. It was a network of veterans who were notable for financial success or community activities. That's how I met Dan (Dan Meeks is a Vietnam veteran who served in the Ranch Hands, an Air Force unit at Bien Hoa that was assigned to spray Agent Orange. Meeks is the CompuServe sponsor for the Military Veterans Forum).

"The forum really was Dan's brainchild. He and other CompuServe people were involved in veterans affairs and were concerned that there was no central organization where veterans could get their questions answered. At least not without going through miles of red tape or feeling embarrassed about what they were looking for. Dan thought we could do something about that situation. Because of my background Dan asked me to design a forum that would meet the needs of veterans."

In addition to his job at the hospital and his volunteer work, Dave also spends time working for his one-man consulting firm. And when not involved in those activities, he's making public speaking rounds for the YMCA or the Columbus Indian Center. How does he manage to handle administrative duties for the forum?



Sharing Vietnam experiences: *Aldstadt*

"It's difficult sometimes. I spend as much time as I can on the forum and that's still not enough. We now have several thousand members and they run things as much as I do. Although I wish it were otherwise, I consider myself a part-time forum administrator. It's fortunate that we have a number of members who take the time to lead discussions, answer questions, and otherwise help with the administrative duties I often can't get to. I feel strongly about our members' involvement, and nothing is changed unless the members agree to it.

"With our varied membership it's important that we consider the different backgrounds and needs. Some people say that the forum is oriented towards Vietnam veterans but it wasn't designed that way. It's just that the majority of current members served in Vietnam. Even though we're getting new men and women members who have recently been discharged, most of our membership is concentrated in the late 30's to mid 40's age group. When those people were of the age to be in the military, it happened to be during the Vietnam era."

Dave's own Vietnam experience took place in 1968 and 1969. However, when he left the war zone it wasn't to be the last time he'd set foot on Vietnamese soil. Thirteen years later he would return in a role he couldn't have foreseen as a 20-year-old draftee.

"In 1982 I was helping to put together local chapters for the Vietnam Veterans of America. The national organization had made a controversial move by sending a delegation off to Vietnam the previous Christmas. Another trip was being planned and the Ohio chapter, less than pleased with what occurred on the first visit, wanted someone to go over as an observer. Because I was considered knowledgeable and had written legislation on the Agent Orange issue, the national organization agreed to bring me along if it was agreeable to the Ohio organization. There were a number of subjects we wanted to explore including the Missing in Action and Agent Orange issues. Six of us were there and we were the first working delegation of veterans to go back and talk about these issues.

"It was probably the most unique experience I've had. Flying into Hanoi after being there [Vietnam] 13 years ago when these people were the enemy . . . Here I was flying into their capitol and being greeted by the North Vietnamese Army — in their uniforms and carrying weapons — and I was standing there in civilian clothes. It felt strange to be one of the few people walking around Hanoi as a free American. The last Americans that had been there before me were prisoners-of-war. So it brought back some strange emotions — everything from fear to anger, to a certain amount of satisfaction that we were actually accomplishing something."

During the years following that visit, the Vietnamese accounted for some of the missing Americans and the Agent Orange issue has come home to haunt the lives and families of many American veterans who served in Vietnam. Dave devotes much of his time to helping others and he disagrees with many who considered the Vietnam war to have been a tragedy.

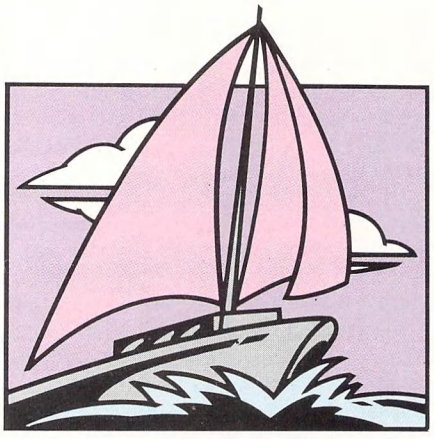
"The tragedy was leaving Vietnam where so many hundreds of thousands have been killed. I think many people have the wrong idea of what went on over there. Our country's leading award, the Congressional Medal of Honor, shows what we as a nation feel about killing. I don't know of a single time the Medal was awarded to someone for killing someone else. It is only awarded when an American put his own life in danger to save the lives of others. I think that says it all."

— James Moran

Forum Invites Disney Fans

Through the Florida Forum on CompuServe, Disney fans can share the fun of Walt Disney World right from their terminals. In addition to new files on Walt Disney World, Phil Hopkins Jr. takes subscribers backstage for a first-hand experience of the Disney magic in his "How do they do that?" series.

Online conferences include such topics as favorite rides. The Florida Forum's online "beach party" will continue each week in the conference area. GO FLORIDA



Sailing Forum Available

The Sailing Forum now is available on CompuServe for those involved with any type of wind-powered motion on water. Discussion topics will range from boats and upcoming races to nautical activities. Information on all aspects of sailing — from boat maintenance tips to emergency safety procedures — will be available in the forum.

Sail Magazine, sponsor of the forum, will provide up-to-date information on new equipment, highlights of the America's Cup races and more. GO SAILING

Students' Forum Offers Newsletter

The year 1992 will mark the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America and plans for international celebrations already are in progress.

To keep CompuServe subscribers up-to-date on the quincentenary plans and to retell the story of Christopher Columbus, the Students' Forum now offers *Discovery Five Hundred*, the newsletter of the International Columbian Quincentenary Alliance Ltd.

To read the newsletter, type DL5 at the function prompt in the Students' Forum. GO STUFO

NEW PRODUCTS

OpNet Forum Reorganizes

OpNet, the forum covering eye health and vision topics, has reorganized, with new sections for such topics as contact lenses, lazy and crossed eyes, eye health and surgery.

The forum administrators, all professionals in optometry, can answer questions about extended-wear contact lenses, myopia surgery, visual training, cataracts, glaucoma, diabetic vision problems, hard gas-permeable contact lenses and any other topic related to vision.

Files on various aspects of eye health, including questions and answers from the American Optometric Association, are available. Online conferences feature guest speakers from the medical and optometric professions. GO OPNET

Rare Disease Database Expands

The Rare Disease Database contains new investigational therapy information on the use of electronic spinal implants on people with cerebral palsy and spasmodic torticollis. Some individuals with spasmodic torticollis are experimentally testing the use of the orphan drug "Botulinum A Toxin." For more information refer to the specific articles in the database.

The AIDS Update contains timely information concerning the unfounded fear some people have toward donating blood. GO RDB

Halley Newsletter Now in Forum

For CompuServe subscribers who enjoyed the *Halley's Comet Watch Newsletter* earlier this year, the final four issues now are available in the Science and Math Forum.

Read the preliminary results of the Halley spacecraft interceptions, scan the report covering the dedication of the official Halley's Comet Time Capsule and discover what Miss Perplexity and her friends are up to now. To access the newsletters, type DL0 at the function prompt in the Science and Math Forum. GO SCIENCE

West Coast Travel Expands

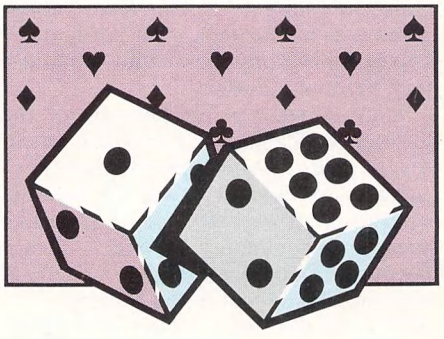
West Coast Travel has added three sections on Arizona to its ever-expanding coverage of the western states. The new sections include the Grand Canyon National Park, the Phoenix/Flagstaff region and Tucson. As with the other West Coast Travel features — now numbering 70 destinations covering the 12 western states — the articles are based on personal, onsite visits to the area.

Information about Hawaii also is available. Read about the islands of Oahu and Hawaii, the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, the Kona Kohala Coast and the Hilo Region. GO WESTCOAST

Rehabilitation Data Online

A new database dealing with handicapped rehabilitation now is available in conjunction with the Handicapped Users Database on CompuServe. The Rehabilitation Database is provided by the Office of Technology Transfer of the US Veterans Administration, the source of nearly all current rehabilitation research and development.

The OTT will be disseminating information about advances in rehabilitation engineering to researchers, clinicians, the handicapped public and those associated with handicapped persons. GO REHAB



Casino Expands Playing Hours

Card players and gamblers will be interested to know that the CompuServe Casino, formerly open from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m., now is open all the time for those who want to practice their gambling savvy.

Open only to CompuServe subscribers, this online casino simulates the activity of a real casino. When you enter the Casino for the first time, an account will be opened for you. Imaginary credits are used for wagering and if you run out of credits you can go to the cashier for more. Your account balance will be displayed as you leave the Casino or visit the cashier. GO CASINO

Color Mail Player Now Available

CompuServe subscribers who would like to see what Color Mail can do before they purchase the entire program can get a sneak preview by using the new Hallmark Color Mail Player program.

The C-Mail Player program gives Apple II and Commodore 64 and C-128 users the ability to see the types of greetings that can be created with the Color Mail software.

CompuServe subscribers can get the C-Mail Player program in two ways. If your current terminal program contains the XMODEM transfer protocol or if you are using VIDTEX, you can download the Player program from several CompuServe forums, including the Color Mail Exchange Forum. To get the current listing of forums offering the program, type GO COLORMAIL at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

The C-Mail Player also is available by mail order. A sampling of several greetings is included on the disk to highlight the types of animation, sound and music possible when you create a Color Mail greeting.

The C-Mail Player is free when you download it from a CompuServe forum; only regular connect time charges apply. When you order the disk by mail, a $3.50 handling charge will be added to your monthly CompuServe bill. User documentation is available online in the forums and also is provided with the mail-order disk.

To learn more about this special offer, type GO COLORMAIL at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service and choose "Color Mail Happenings" from the menu.

Gift of Time

Online Today offers subscribers the chance to write a 200-word essay on how they use CompuServe's Information Service.

Your essay should be typed double-spaced. Send it to *Online Today*, CompuServe Incorporated, 5000 Arlington Centre Blvd., P.O. Box 20212, Columbus, OH 43220, or by an EasyPlex message to 70003,1661. Please include your full name, address and User ID number.

If we use your column, you will receive 10 hours of standard service connect time (a $60 value) and a byline.

Answers from Customer Service

Q: Where can I find the Personal File Area on the menus?

A: Your Personal File Area is located in the Computers/Technology area of the CompuServe Information Service. You can choose item 11 from the top menu and select the option for the Personal File Area. You also can type PER at any prompt and directly access your Personal File Area.

Q: When I selected a detailed directory of my files in my Personal File Area, a screen message displayed the total number of blocks. What is a block?

A: A block of information in your Personal File Area is equivalent to approximately 640 characters on the CompuServe Information Service. Each subscriber has a total of 200 blocks in his or her Personal File Area.

Q: How do I upload a file to my Personal File Area?

A: You can upload a file to your Personal File Area by selecting the menu option to upload or download a file. When you select the option, you will be prompted for a transfer protocol of XMODEM (MODEM7), B Protocol, A Protocol, DC2/DC4 CAPture protocol, or MACintosh XMODEM protocol. Once you have selected the protocol, you will be prompted to upload or download the file. If you decide not to transfer a file at this time, you then can select the Exit option.

Q: There is a selection from the File Management menu to enter command mode. I tried this and received an OK prompt. What should I do?

A: Command mode simply allows you enter commands to maneuver on the CompuServe Information Service. From the OK prompt, you can type a T to return to the Top menu or a GO Command to go to another area of the Information Service.

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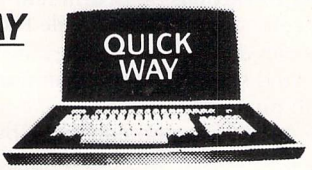

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- QUICK WAY is available through CompuServe—the largest computer information network—which allows you instant access to Standard & Poor's Reports, Value Line Data Base II, and 10 years of market data on some 50,000 securities.

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GO EBB or circle 8 on the Reader Service Form.

IBM Forum Opens Educational Section

The IBM New Users Forum has opened a new section for educational software. You will find a large and growing number of educational programs in the new Data Library 9 of the forum. These are only some of the new programs and textfiles you will find in the data libraries of CompuServe's forum. Following is a sampling of new files added to forum data libraries in recent weeks:

IBM NEW USERS FORUM
(GO IBMNEW)

Educational Software Data — Features the following programs in its Data Library 9. All are for the IBM PC and close compatibles.

Math Drill — A BASIC program that drills addition. File ADMATH.BAS.

Learn to Read — A BASIC program teaching how to read and write big numbers. File BIGNUM.BAS

Learn State Capitals — A BASIC file teaching children North American states and provinces and their capitals. File CAPTOL.BAS

Learn Fractions — A drill and practice for compound fractions. File FRAC.BAS

Funnels & Buckets — A learning game improving skills in adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. The object of the game is to pop equations by solving them as they fall from a funnel. File FUNNEL.ARC

IQ Builder — A series of programs to test and strengthen general knowledge. File IQBLDR.ARC.

Memory Enhancer — A BASIC program to help in memorization of a poem, speech or any other passage, based on principles developed by B.F. Skinner. File LRNIT.BAS

Math Drill — A BASIC program to drill children in addition and subtraction. Designed for first and second graders. File MATHDR.BAS.

Math School — A computer program drilling arithmetic problems. File MATHSC.ARC.

Here are more samples of recent uploads to CompuServe's forum data libraries:

COMMODORE ARTS AND GAMES FORUM
(GO CBMART)

Musicplex — A sound and music editor. While not polyphonic, all three voices of the SID chip can be combined to create complex sounds. Musicplex features two synthesizer panels, record, playback, tempo, save-to-disk sounds and tunes and more. File MCPLEX.IMG in Data Library 1. Sample sounds located in programs in the same library include ACHOO.IMG, ALIEN.IMG, BMBLB.IMG, DAISY.IMG, HRMNC.IMG, TUBA.IMG and VIOLN.IMG.

COMMODORE COMMUNICATIONS FORUM
(GO CBMCOM)

VIC-20 — A terminal program modified to allow XMODEM transfer protocol. File CTERM4.BIN in Data Library 8.

COMMODORE COMMUNICATIONS FORUM
(GO CBMCOM)

Job Priority — Manages your "Things To Do" list in 1-10 categories sorted by priorities. Needs disk. Handles color, monochrome, black-and-white monitors; any printer. Files JOBL64.IMG and JOBLIST in Data Library 3.

COMMODORE COMMUNICATIONS FORUM
(GO CBMCOM)

RIBIT — A series of files to build a bulletin board system. Files RBOOT.IMG, RMAIN.IMG, RMAKR.IMG, RML.IMG, RSPD.IMG and RDOC.TXT in Data Library 3.

IBMNET COMMUNICATIONS FORUM
(GO IBMCOM)

Error-Checking — Version 2.29 of Columbia University's implementation of the Kermit error-checking protocol. For IBM PCs and compatibles. File KERM29.ARC in Data Library 3.

IBMNET COMMUNICATIONS FORUM
(GO IBMCOM)

FIDO — Version 11V of this bulletin board system. File FIDO.ARC in Data Library 4.

IBMNET NEW USERS FORUM
(GO IBMNEW)

Fantasy Game — A role-playing game in which the player is given 9,000 "life points" to assign to various attributes, then is plunged into one of five levels of a dungeon to battle evil critters. For IBM PCs and compatibles. File QUEST.ARC in Data Library 3.

IBMNET NEW USERS FORUM
(GO IBMNEW)

Star Trek — A new version of the game that you can play against a friend via a 300-baud modem link or against your own computer. Color system required. For IBM PCs and compatibles. File TREK23.ARC in Data Library 3.

IBMNET NEW USERS FORUM
(GO IBMNEW)

Music Programs — So you think your IBM PC or compatible is limited in the music it can make? Neil Rubenking (aka Pianoman) presents a collection of COM music programs with simulated multiple voices to change your mind. File COMTUN.ARC in Data Library 4.

Phone Number Displays — Takes a phone number and displays 2,187 possible words you can make with the letters corresponding to numbers on the phone dial, or takes a "phone word" and returns a number to you. For IBM PCs or compatibles. FONEWD.ARC in Data Library 4.

IBMNET SOFTWARE FORUM
(GO IBMSW)

Expense Program — An easy-to-use, menu-driven program for keeping track of home or small-business expenses, including a checkbook and up to 250 user-definable expense/income categories. Color or monochrome. For IBM PCs or compatibles. File FC2000.ARC in Data Library 5.

IBM COMMUNICATIONS FORUM
(GO IBMCOM)

BBS Program — Allowing a remote user to change directories and download any file not named as protected in the configuration file. File MHOST.ARC in Data Library 4.

IBM SOFTWARE FORUM
(GO IBMSW)

TimeSaver+ — a full-featured version of MicroCon's graphic schedule manager. Events can be created, deleted, copied, moved or edited in "full screen" fashion. A month's schedule is visible on the screen at once. Extend function allows detailed information to be attched to any of several events. File TIMESA.ARC in Data Library 6.

Label Maker Program — Version 5.1. LM will read filenames from a disk, provides for the input of a disk name and comments and then prints the information onto a standard mailing label. Most dot-matrix printers will work. Label information also includes comments, date created, total files, diskette format, space used and space free. File LBLMKR.ARC in Data Library 6.

MODEL 100 FORUM
(GO M100SIG)

Program — EasyPlex program with timed dial, carrier detect and redial feature. For the TRS-80 Model 100. File EMAIL8.6MM in Data Library 1.

RAMS File — A textfile discussing expansion RAMs for the Model 100, 200, NEC PC-8201A and the Olivetti M10. The file details what is available and

gives addresses for the sources. File EXPAND.RAM in Data Library 6.

ATARI 16-BIT FORUM
(GO ATARI16)

Atari Conference — A transcript of a conference held June 21 in which many prominent members of the Atari community gathered to discuss piracy of Atari software. File PIRACY.C01 in Data Library 8.

DiskTop — a Disk Library utility for the Atari ST that catalogs your disks and builds a catalog of all files and folders and the name of the disk. Entries can be searched, sorted and printed. Use only with a color display. File DISKTO.PRG in Data File 6.

Yahtzee — For the Atari ST. It is completely mouse driven and works on color systems only. File YAHTZE.PRG in Data Library 1.

Bookkeeping — A program allowing you to keep track of your personal budget. Program can manipulate up to 580 checks in memory at once. For the Atari ST.

Game — Another game from public-domain gamemaster Dave Oblad — this one called Labyrinth. File LABYR.XMO in Data Library 1.

APPLE II & III FORUM
(GO APPLE)

Patch File — A file that, when connected to the directory containing the ProDOS version of ASCII Express Professional (4.30P), will apply a patch to make it operate correctly when uploading to CompuServe. File AECIS.EXE in Data Library 8.

Scroll Program — A program allowing you to scroll through CompuServe forum messages created by ASCII Express Professional, create new messages or replies or archive items of interest. Requires an enhanced Apple IIe or IIc, ProDOS and ASCII Express Professional or a similar terminal program. Files MMM1.EXE and MMM2.EXE in Data Library 8. You must download both files.

Macro — A description of an ASCII EXPRESS PRO macro that will automatically log on to a forum, read marked and new messages from selected sections, save buffer to disk and log off without operator intervention. File AEPRO.MAC in Data Library 1.

TANDY PROFESSIONAL FORUM
(GO TRS80PRO)

Othello — Version by Jon Shemitz of Emerald City Software. Runs on the Tandy 1000 and perhaps other IBM-PC compatibles and supports both color and monochrome displays. Features context-sensitive pop-up help windows. File OTHELL.ARC in Data Library 5.

Hurricane Tracking Program — For the Atlantic and Gulf Coast areas. The file also contains actual tracking tables for two of 1985's biggest hurricanes, Gloria and Kate. The tracking tables can be used to display a storm track on a graphic map of the Gulf Coast and lower Atlantic. For the Tandy 1000, the IBM PC and compatibles. File STORM.ARC in Data Library 5.

THE AMIGA FORUM
(GO AMIGAFORUM)

Trojan Horse Programs — A textfile that explains what they are, how they can cause you to lose information from your hard disk and how to protect against them. File TROJAN.TXT in Data Library 0.

Reversi — A version of this game (also known as Othello) for the Amiga with several options, such as indicating possible moves, suggesting moves and voice. File REVRSI.ARC in Data Library 2.

Picture — A high-resolution, shaded, three-dimensional picture for the Amiga. File ROBOTA.PIC in Data Library 3.

Archive Utility — Version 0.11 of the Amiga utility. File ARC.EXE in Data Library 4.

Starterm 3.01 — ANSI terminal program for the Amiga with Checksum/CRC XMODEM, automatic XMODEM padding stripper, dial directory, split-screen chat mode and Paste text from TxEd. Handles baud rates from 300 through 19,200. File STERM.ARC in Data Library 4.

TRS-80 COLOR COMPUTER FORUM
(GO COCO)

CoCo Utility — A utility to allow two CoCo users running SENDDISK to send an entire disk (or part of one) to one another. It functions at either 300 or 1200 baud, and can be used with the Serial port or the RS-232 Pak. File SENDSK.BIN in Data Library 4.

THE SPACE FORUM
(GO SPACEFORUM)

Meteor File — A textfile listing the principal annual meteor showers, their radiants and a short description of each. File METEOR.TXT in Data Library 7.

THE MUSIC FORUM
(GO MUSICFORUM)

Newsletter — An electronic newsletter intended to keep "Deadheads" (Grateful Dead fans) up to date on information about Grateful Dead concerts, recording projects and tape trading. File DEDHED.LTR in Data Library 1 and 2.

MACINTOSH USERS GROUP
(GO MACUS)

Boards Listing — A list of Macintosh bulletin boards across the United States. BBSUP5.TXT in Data Library 2.

Conference Transcript — Edited transcript of "An Evening with John Sculley" — a special conference held on CompuServe on July 13, 1986, as part of a special online weekend for users groups. File SCULL.CO in Data Library 6.

Animator Program — A three-dimensional program for the Macintosh. Given the rectangular coordinates along with a display parameter, any three-dimensional image can be animated. File ANM3D.Bin in Data Library 4.

ClipEdit — Version 1.2 of this shareware desk accessory that manipulates text on the clipboard. File CLIPDA.BIN in Data Library 1.

How to Download

To download these or nearly any other programs or textfiles from forum data libraries, you must have a computer that permits storage of incoming information from your modem (generally a hard disk or a floppy disk system). You also need a terminal program that can receive the incoming information and direct it to your disk.

To begin a download, type DL plus the data library number, then press the Return key at the forum's Function Menu. At the Data Library prompt, type DOW, and then a space, and finally the name and extension (if any) of the file you want to download. Then, press the Return key.

You will be asked which protocol you will be using to download the file. CompuServe's own "A" and "B" protocol and XMODEM are error-checking transfer protocols, meaning the transfer will be without errors that can cause the program to fail. Be sure you know which of these protocols your terminal program supports. The DC2/DC4 CAPTURE protocol is particularly good for downloading textfiles stored in ASCII code. This protocol is supported by most terminal programs.

For more information about downloading from forum databases, leave a message addressed to SYSOP in the forum that supports your computer system or in the forum where you are attempting the download.

David Peyton is a co-author of How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe. *His CompuServe User ID number is 76703,244.*

Foreign Securities Database Debuts

A new International Securities Database on CompuServe's Business Information Service offers pricing information on more than 16,000 securities traded on the world's major stock exchanges. Both equity and option issues are covered.

"We have had requests from leading investment bankers on Wall Street for this type of data," says Bob O'Malley, manager of database products for CompuServe.

Since higher yields on investments are available outside the United States and institutional investors are taking more of a global perspective when they make investment decisions, the International Securities Database can help them diversify their portfolios.

Screening and graphics capabilities are available within the database, as is detailed information on such topics as earnings per share, capital changes, dividends and profiles of issues. Extel Computing Limited in London serves as information provider.

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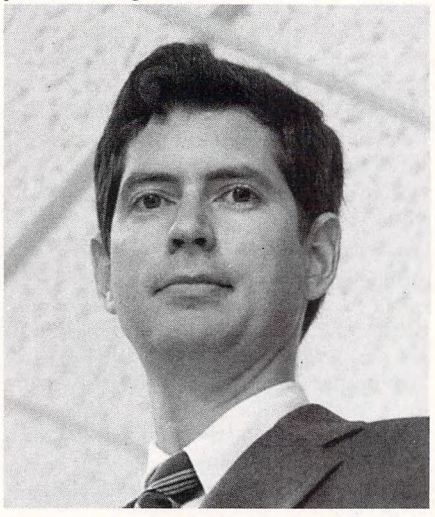
In addition to helping the institutional investor, the service is useful to investment bankers, money managers who oversee mutual funds and pension funds, insurance companies, investor relations departments, corporate planning departments and other large investors. Export/import companies will find it provides valuable information on overseas market activities and currency exchange rates.

"We think many large organizations will have a natural interest in this kind of data," says O'Malley.

There are many ways to use the database. Its easy-to-use, prompt-driven screening capabilities are unique among securities products. Users can screen all issues in the database based on such elements as industry, earnings, price and price/earnings ratio.



Marketing foreign securities data: *O'Malley*

For instance, if an investment firm wanted to determine the most profitable car manufacturer in the world, the database could be screened by industry and by price/earnings ratio.

After a group of desirable car manufacturers has been selected, the choice can then be narrowed through the use of graphic comparisons.

Graphics can visually portray price history for a particular stock issue, or can illustrate how several issues compare to one another. The performance of selected stock issues can be graphed in relation to a given economic index in order to determine whether the stock's performance was consistent with local economic conditions. Over 300 worldwide economic indexes, such as the Standard & Poor's sub-index and the London Financial Times Actuarial Index, are included in the database.

Changes in a company's capitalization can be evaluated by tracking offerings of additional shares of stock. Interpretation of a stock's market value can then be weighted in terms of the number of shares outstanding.

Profiles of issues provide such information as company name, type of industry, country of incorporation and registration, description of the issue, par value, currency in which the stock trades, average price for the past 60 and 90 days, high and low trades during those periods, price/earnings ratio, dividends expected in the next year, and beta factor — a measurement of risk.

Currency translations also are available, helping users directly evaluate the exchange rate for the dollar against the yen, the British pound or any one of 150 different currencies. Stock prices can be retrieved in any of those currencies.

In conjunction with use of the database, users can run standard programs or they can write their own programs to extract particular information for a customized report. "There is a library of FORTRAN-callable subroutines that allows custom user programs to access data in a direct manner," says Mike Locke, product manager.

Information in the database is updated daily, as it becomes available in various parts of the world.

Because the service simplifies institutional investors' research tasks, O'Malley says it will "help them increase the frequency of their overseas trading to diversify their portfolios."

A firm using this database no longer needs to conduct print media research on international securities or to create its own phone-in database. Data on the desired issues can be entered directly into its research department's own database.

The International Securities Database accommodates expansion as additional information becomes available from various securities markets. "We designed it with the future in mind," O'Malley says. "When the markets change, our database will reflect those changes."

The International Securities Database is available at no additional subscription fee to the infrequent user who is a CompuServe Business Information Service subscriber. For high-volume users, set fee schedules are available based on the number of access points and depending on whether domestic or international use is involved.

— Kathy Baird

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Business Briefs

CompuServe Alcar Interface Available

A new program known as the CompuServe Alcar Interface allows CompuServe Business Information Service customers to download COMPUSTAT II® data to a file in a format that is compatible with the popular Alcar Business Analysis software.

Such an interface will save time and avoid data-entry errors for corporate planners and merger and acquisition specialists as they evaluate various companies.

The CompuServe Alcar Interface is compatible with both Alcar Value Planner and Alcar Merger Planner. Alcar Value Planner helps users decide the worth of a company based on how projected financial statements would impact shareholder value. Alcar Merger Planner helps users evaluate how a merger, acquisition or divestiture would impact an organization's accounting statement and shareholder value.

The prompt-driven program can be used with either a floppy or hard disk.

Noload Mutual Fund Directory

The Noload Mutual Fund Directory on CompuServe has been updated to describe more than 400 mutual funds that charge no "load" or brokerage fee. The listing of assets is current through the first quarter of 1986.

Due to current tax legislation, several of the newly included funds are of special interest to investors. These funds include tax-free municipal bond funds, zero-coupon and convertible bond funds, and international funds.

CompuServe subscribers can request a prospectus on any of the funds in the directory without charge. Requests will be processed by the Noload Mutual Fund Association.

The Noload Mutual Fund Directory also allows users to search for funds using the fund name, fund manager, investment strategy of the fund, initial investment, ticker symbol and other criteria.

To access the Noload Mutual Fund Directory, type GO NOLOAD at any prompt in the CompuServe Information Service.

I/B/E/S Adds Online Tutorial

If you have ever had difficulties interpreting the earnings portion of financial statements or are unsure of what it means to you as an investor, try looking up the information in the Institutional Brokers' Estimate System on CompuServe.

I/B/E/S now provides complete descriptions of the items within reports and offers a tutorial describing the implications of earnings reports.

The new menu format of the I/B/E/S reporting area contains information about why earnings affect stock prices, how to deal with your broker's recommendations and the importance of trends, as well as a glossary of earnings terms.

I/B/E/S helps subscribers with the Executive Option learn more about prospective investments and invest their money more wisely. To find out more about I/B/E/S, type GO IBES at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service and use HRB as your ticker symbol. You will not be charged to retrieve this report.

Venture Magazine Offer in USEN

For a limited time, Publishers Marketing Center and the US Entrepreneurs' Network are offering a complimentary, no-obligation, two-year subscription to Venture magazine.

Venture, the magazine for entrepreneurial business owners and investors, features monthly articles on issues such as financing, marketing, management, franchising, business opportunities, sales and venture strategies. Venture reports on high-growth enterprises and includes interviews with the people who started them.

To receive your complimentary, two-year subscription to Venture magazine, access the US Entrepreneurs' Network by typing GO USEN at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service. Non-members of the USEN may follow the New Member menu to join the forum and become eligible for the Venture magazine offer. For more details about the offer, read the USEN's Short Bulletin.

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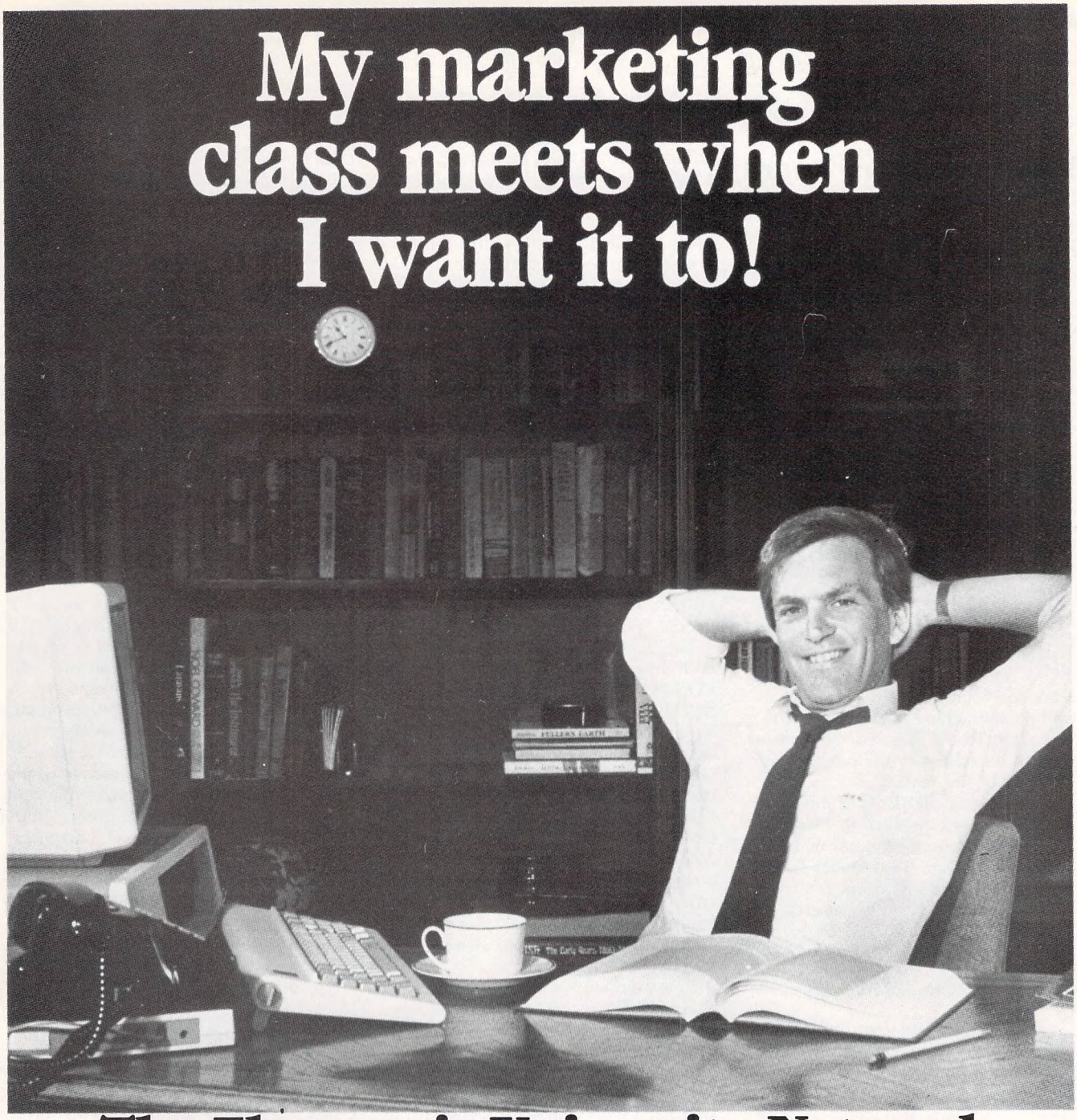

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For some time I've known I needed a course that would fine tune my strategic marketing skills, but with a demanding job, a family, it's not easy to do. Then I was told I missed a promotion because I needed an MBA. Still, going back to school at my age seemed nearly impossible. With my work schedule, the kids, there just isn't enough time to go to campus.

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What's more, since the credit I have earned comes from fully-accredited colleges and universities, my company is covering 100% of the costs through its Tuition Reimbursement program.

Studying via the network is typically less expensive than equivalent on-campus courses—and no computer knowledge is needed to participate.

For details on course costs, participating schools, full degree programs, and an Electronic University Network 1986-1987 Catalog, call toll free:

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Bubble Memory Board

Emulates Floppy or Hard Disk

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860 Denison St.
Markham, ONT, Canada L3R 4H1
416/475-3370 or 416/494-9563

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT and 100 percent compatibles; AT&T 6300; Olivetti M24; not compatible with IBM PC-AT or Compaq Deskpro.
Operating Systems: PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher.
Features: PDIB512 and PDIB256 boards provide 512K and 256K of non-volatile bubble memory respectively; PDIB512 can emulate 360K floppy or 512K hard disk with system booting and password protection capabilities; PDIB256 emulates floppy disk only; utility software included (not copy protected).
Requirements: Computer must have ROM Autoscan feature; utility software to "attach" PDIB boards to computers lacking ROM Autoscan (for example, old PCs with 64K planar system boards) was not available at the time of this review.
Model Tested: PDIB512 Bubble Memory Board installed in 256K Compaq Portable Computer and 640K Compaq Deskpro Model 2 computer (Intel 8088 microprocessor); each system tested with Compaq MS-DOS 2.02 and IBM PC-DOS 2.10.
Base Price: $1,000 for PDIB512.

Reviewed by Ernest E. Mau

Used for disk emulation, bubble memories are faster than floppies and compare favorably with hard disks. Their non-volatile nature prevents data losses when power is interrupted without needing backup batteries. Unlike EPROMS, data can be manipulated freely, without complicated erasing and reprogramming procedures. Furthermore, bubble memories have no moving parts and are immune to environmental and operating hazards that adversely affect disk storage.

Pure Data's PDIB512 puts this technology on a full-length expansion card. Sixteen internal switches and several jumpers control the basic operating parameters, and it can emulate either a half-megabyte hard drive or a 360K floppy drive. In either mode, it can be made self-booting, with password protection if desired, and it can be write protected.

As a hard disk, the PDIB512 attaches automatically. It will be drive C if no hard disk already exists, or drive D if a hard disk is present. The system may not have more than one hard disk previously installed. The PDIB512 self-boots if operating system and supporting software is stored in it and if floppy drive A is unloaded.

As a pseudo floppy disk, self-booting is a switch-controlled option. With system board and PDIB512 switches properly set, self-booting automatically trades places with physical floppy drive A. Thus, the PDIB512 becomes drive A and moves the original floppy drive to B, C or D, depending on the number of physical floppy drives.

Most users can run the PDIB512 in its factory configuration. A good thing, because the manual's exhaustive coverage of addressing and other switch settings may try the patience of non-technical people.

The default configuration emulates a hard disk at EPROM address D000 and I/O Base Address 268 using DMA channel 3, disk emulation vector 6F and high-speed data operation. As a hard disk, it attaches automatically as the next drive, typically C or D, above existing floppy and hard drives.

Incidentally, the PDIB512 "shares" DMA channel 3 and does not interfere with other devices using that same channel. If reconfigured for floppy emulation, the user must set a specific drive configuration with PDIB512 switches and change system board switches to reflect an additional drive.

In a Compaq Portable Computer, the PDIB512 did exactly what it was supposed to do in all modes. As a half-megabyte hard disk, it let me boot from either a floppy in drive A or from the PDIB512 as drive C, depending on whether I loaded drive A. Aside from size, the PDIB512 appeared as a real hard disk. Installed as a third 360K floppy drive, the PDIB512 did indeed swap places with physical drive A when set to self-boot and remained as drive C if self-booting was switched off. It could be formatted, labeled and handled just like any floppy drive.

Data could be written to and read from the PDIB512 by any program, and the device was quick and responsive. However, using hard disk emulation was more effective than floppy emulation, which uses 360K (70 percent) of the bubble memory and seems wasteful.

The PDIB512 has two speeds. Slow speed transfers data in serial fashion, while high speed transfers in parallel fashion. The difference is noticeable but not necessarily crucial. For example, a program loading in 7 seconds at high speed needed 9.5 seconds at slow speed. But the slow setting consumes less power and may be the only usable setting in heavily loaded computers to prevent stressing or overloading power supplies.

I also tried the card in a Compaq Deskpro. But even after resolving some memory conflicts, it was not fully operational. As a hard disk, it could not be restructured and reformatted according to the manual. Eventually, I was informed that the PDIB512 is not considered compatible with the IBM PC-AT or Compaq Deskpro. Depending on user demand, Pure Data may develop a version for those computers, but the existing board simply should not be run in a PC-AT or Deskpro.

The PDIB512 may be hard for some users to justify. After all, an internal hard disk costs far less and holds far more. But it should be valuable to those who need certain programs immediately available yet want quick reprogramming on demand. It also would satisfy companies wanting employees to access only specific tasks or wanting password protection to prevent unauthorized access. In process control applications or harsh environments, a "diskless" computer dedicated to specific operations can be made by programming cards in a master machine and moving them into individual stations.

In a suitable application, the PDIB512 is an excellent choice for non-volatile disk emulation.

Ernest E. Mau, a full-time free-lance writer and Online Today *reviews editor, is based in Aurora, Colo. He is the author of several books and nearly 300 articles on microcomputer products and applications.*

Trademarks: Accent (Maynard Electronics Inc.); Bernoulli Box (IOMEGA Corp.); Compaq and Deskpro (Compaq Computer Corp.); IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and PC-DOS (International Business Machines Corp.); MS-DOS (Microsoft Corp.).

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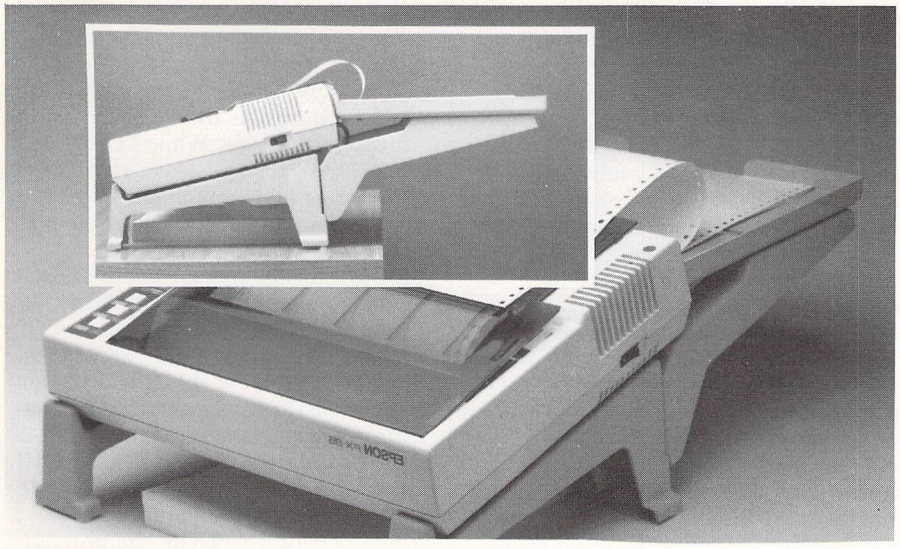

Universal Printer Stand

Saves Space and Eases Printer Use

Curtis Manufacturing Co. Inc.
305 Union St.
Peterborough, NH 03458
603/924-3823

Printers: Any standard or wide carriage printer.
Features: Modular construction fits printers of any width; tilted for easy printout viewing; padded non-skid feet dampen noise and vibration; detachable paper tray suspended by cantilever from rear of stand.
Options: None.
Model Tested: PS-1 Universal Printer Stand using Epson FX-85 (standard carriage) and Genicom 3410 (wide carriage) printers.
List Price: $19.95

Reviewed by Ernest E. Mau

Curtis Manufacturing's Universal Printer Stand is the most practical printer support device I've seen. Two freestanding support pedestals can be positioned at any separation for any printer width, and an adjustable paper tray mounted cantilever-style to the rear of the pedestals also adapts to the needed width. It is truly "universal."

Some simple assembly is required but will not take anyone more than five minutes. I took four minutes, and that counts opening and unpacking a shipping carton. The only slowdown might be positioning the paper tray so printouts fold neatly, but it is not a sensitive adjustment and should not take long.

This stand tilts the printer forward at a fixed angle to ease printout viewing, and paper may be stacked under the printer for rear or bottom feeding. The tray catches printouts, eliminates spills onto the floor and facilitates collecting outputs without taking up desk space.

Although it looks flimsy at first, the stand is strong and solid enough for any printer. It supported a heavy Genicom 3410 prone to severe vibration without any problem. While less effective than an acoustic enclosure, the stand lived up to its claims of dampening noise and vibration.

I usually don't stack paper under the printer, preferring cartons on the floor, and the stand didn't interfere at all. Paper folding into the tray was smooth if all printer covers were in place to properly route paper to the rear.

This is one slick stand. Reverse the pedestals back to front, and it even doubles as a rigid tilt stand for a portable computer. At $19.95, there is simply no way to go wrong buying this stand.

Ernest E. Mau, a full-time free-lance writer and Online Today *reviews editor, is based in Aurora, Colo. He is the author of several books and nearly 300 articles on microcomputer products and applications.*

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Electronic Edition Hardware Reviews

The following hardware reviews are available this month on *Online Today Electronic Edition* by typing GO OLT-220 at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

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Manufacturer: *Quadram Corp., Communications Products Div.*
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LAPDOS

Desktop Computer Speak 'Portable'

Traveling Software Inc.
11050 Fifth Ave., N.E.
Seattle, WA 98125
206/367-8090

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT and compatibles.
Operating Systems: MS-DOS or PC-DOS 2.0 or higher.
Media: Provided on a single 5.25-inch diskette for PC-DOS or MS-DOS computers.
Copy Protection: None.
Requirements: Tandy Portable Disk Drive or Brother 3.5-inch disk drive for TRS-80 Model 100 or Model 200 computer; LAPDOS comes with adapter to connect one of those drives to a 25-pin RS-232C serial port (COM1 or COM2) of a PC-DOS or MS-DOS computer.
Other Requirements: 64K to 66K of free RAM.
Optional Items: Word processors, database managers and similar software capable of importing and exporting ASCII or other compatible data file formats.
Systems used for test: (1) 24K TRS-80 Model 100 with Tandy Portable Disk Drive and Portable Computer Support Group's Super ROM. (2) 640K Compaq Deskpro Model 2 with two diskette drives, 20MB IOMEGA ALPHA-10 Cartridge Drive Subsystem (Bernoulli Box) and IBM Asynchronous Communications Adapter set to COM1 and connected to Tandy Portable Disk Drive.
Price: $89.95 for LAPDOS software and serial port adapter.

Reviewed by Joe Farace

LAPDOS is another neat package from Traveling Software. It lets owners of IBM PCs and compatible computers share data files with Tandy Model 100 and 200 laptops. You wouldn't think these completely different computers would have anything in common, but LAPDOS includes a cable converter for connecting a Tandy (or Brother) 3.5-inch disk drive to your desktop computer, plus software that lets you convert and share data between both computers.

Connecting my Tandy 3.5-inch disk drive to a Compaq Deskpro was simple. I plugged the adapter into the COM1 serial port, plugged the Tandy disk drive's cable into the adapter and set the drive's DIP switches to work at 9600 baud. The computer's serial port is set to 9600 baud automatically by the software. That is it! Some new IBM-compatible multifunction boards add COM3 and COM4 ports, but LAPDOS works only on COM1 or COM2, which shouldn't be much of a problem.

LAPDOS gives you two choices: It can be run as a stand-alone program or may be made memory resident. Typing "LAP/B" loads the program into 64K and lets you quickly move to LAPDOS from within almost any application by keying [ALT-L]. While handy for text, you cannot do this when graphics are displayed on the screen as in Lotus 1-2-3 or similar programs. If you try, the computer will just beep.

Traveling Software also warns against running LAPDOS in the background with programs such as XyWrite using non-standard input routines. In addition, you should never abort out of an MS-DOS disk error when LAPDOS is in the background. That leaves the program stranded, drops out of the foreground application and loses all data.

When LAPDOS is activated, the screen is divided in two. The left half displays MS-DOS file names for the logged disk with their sizes in bytes. The right half shows filenames on the portable disk drive (designated drive P:) and their sizes. A bar cursor selects files to move, copy or erase. A "Help" key summarizes all functions, with short explanations, and supplements the excellent manual.

Bidirectional copying is provided, so you may copy files from the MS-DOS computer to the portable drive or vice versa. When copying MS-DOS files into "portable" format, LAPDOS automatically shortens file names longer than six characters and substitutes the suffix ".DO" for any extensions other than ".CO" or ".BA". When copying from the portable drive to the MS-DOS computer, names are not changed.

One particularly handy function is "Format," which lets the MS-DOS computer format a 3.5-inch disk in the portable drive.

An "Xchange" command converts files from ThinkTank, SideKick and WordStar into a format readable by Traveling Software's own Idea! program or into ASCII files readable by the Model 100's own text processor. I used "Xchange" to transfer WordStar files from the Deskpro to the Model 100 without difficulty. However, the conversion removed all "soft" carriage returns and limited file sizes to a maximum of 64K for transfer, but those were not real problems.

Once transferred, reading data files on my Model 100 was easy. WordStar textfiles were accessible via TEXT, as were ASCII reports from Concentric Information Processor. While I could view data only in "report" form, LAPDOS was a big help in compiling a client list that was instantly accessible while on the road.

To work with database information, it may be stored in "delimited ASCII" files for access by programs that will read that format. Traveling Software's Ultimate ROM II for the Model 100 and 200 contains Idea! and the T-base database manager. By using "Xchange," you can swap data with dBase II, dBase III, Lotus 1-2-3 and other programs. While most of those conversions are accomplished outside LAPDOS, the program does provide for rapid exchange of files between two normally incompatible computers.

Occasionally, I got unexpected error messages. Appendix A of the manual contains a list of common problems and errors. A quick glance showed that the Tandy Portable Disk Drive is highly sensitive to radio-frequency interference, and the manual advises moving the drive farther from the computer, monitor or other drives. What looked like a software glitch really is a hardware problem.

In my review of the Tandy Portable Disk Drive for *Online Today* (print edition, October 1986), I said that it was a major improvement to the Model 100's performance. Now, LAPDOS provides an effective bridge for the person who owns both a Tandy laptop and an IBM-compatible computer. If you are one of these people, LAPDOS will be indispensable.

Joe Farace is a writer and photographer from Denver. He is a contributing editor of PhotoMethods *magazine and his reviews of Macintosh software will appear in an upcoming book from Arrays Inc.*

Trademarks: Compaq and Deskpro (Compaq Computer Corp.); Concentric Information Processor (Concentric Information Systems); dBase II and dBase III (Ashton-Tate); IBM, IBM PC, PC-XT and PC-DOS (International Business Machines Corp.); LAPDOS, TS-DOS, T-base, Ultimate ROM II (Traveling Software Inc.); Lotus and 1-2-3 (Lotus Development Corp.); MS-DOS (Microsoft Corp.); Radio Shack and TRS-80 (Tandy Corp.); SideKick (Borland International); Super ROM (Portable Computer Support Group Inc.); ThinkTank (Living Videotext Inc.); WordStar (MicroPro International Corp.); XyWrite (XyQuest Inc.).

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Twist & Shout!

Expands Printer Capabilities

Spectre Technologies Inc.
22458 Ventura Blvd., Suite E
Woodland Hills, CA 91364
818/716-1655

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and true compatibles; CP/M-based computers.
Operating Systems: PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher; any version of CP/M (Osborne, Morrow and Kaypro formats standard, others available on request).
Media: Requires one diskette drive or a hard disk.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: One of the following dot-matrix printers Apple series, BMC MicroGraphic, C.Itoh, CTI CT-80, DEC LA-50, Epson and compatibles, Gemini, IBM Proprinter or Graphics and compatibles, IDS Prism and MicroPrism, Legend, Mannesmann Tally Spirit and MT160, MPI, NEC 8023AC, Okidata, Panasonic 1091, Hewlett-Packard Thinkjet.
Other Requirements: Minimum 128K RAM for PC/MS-DOS version.
Optional Items: None.
System used for test: 640K IBM PC with 20MB hard disk, one 360K double-sided, double-density diskette drive and Epson FX-80+ printer; running PC-DOS 2.1.
List Prices: $34.95 for PC/MS-DOS and standard CP/M; $39.95 for custom CP/M versions.

Reviewed by James Moran

Spreadsheet users cringe when they print out a report that is too wide for their printers. A 240-column spreadsheet loses credibility when cut into pieces and glued back together into an easily read format. Twist & Shout! solves that problem by printing wide print files sideways (Twist). As a bonus it also prints banners (like "Happy Birthday!") in page-high letters (Shout).

Besides copying distribution programs to a working diskette or hard disk, installation consists of defining your printer to Twist & Shout! This is accomplished by copying an overlay file from the distribution diskette. That's it! The system is ready to process print files.

To use Twist, users can opt for either menu or command mode. Although menus will be helpful to first-time users, I cannot imagine anyone finding the simplified command mode intimidating. There is not much to it unless you change the default printer selection, and that is easily accomplished through a special customization menu. Customizing allows users to specify nonstandard paper sizes, margins, fonts and a dozen or so other printer-related options.

Sideways printing of any ASCII file can be accomplished, and special instructions are available for printing files from Lotus 1-2-3, Symphony, Multiplan, WordStar, and numerous other word processors and spreadsheets.

Readability of the sideways printout is excellent for the default font, but the optional small-character font is somewhat hard to read because of its size. Twist & Shout! is a good value for spreadsheet users, and power users with extended reporting needs may find it indispensable.

James Moran is a free-lance writer and frequent contributor to Online Today. *His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,2253.*

Trademarks: CP/M (Digital Research Inc.); FX-80+ (Epson America Inc.); IBM, IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and PC-DOS (International Business Machines Corp.); Lotus 1-2-3 and Symphony (Lotus Development Corp.); MS/DOS and Multiplan (Microsoft Corp.); Twist & Shout! (JTB Computer Works and Spectre Technologies Inc.); WordStar (MicroPro International Corp.).

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Mac Art Library

For Artful Electronic Publishing

CompuCraft
6818 S. Magnolia Ct.
Englewood, CO 80112
303/850-7472

Computers: Apple Macintosh 512K, Macintosh Plus.
Operating System: Macintosh desktop environment.
Media: Supplied on 11 single-sided diskettes.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: Printer.
Other Requirements: Apple MacPaint software; external drive (recommended).
Optional Items: Hard disk; Apple LaserWriter printer.
System used for test: 512K Apple Macintosh with single-sided internal drive, 800K double-sided external drive and Apple ImageWriter printer.
List Prices: $200 for the complete set; individual disks may be purchased for $39.95 each.

Reviewed by Joe Farace

Anyone involved in electronic publishing knows that a diskful of good clip art can make finished products look more polished. However, the usual problem with clip art packages is that they sharply limit the amount of different artwork they include. That is not true of the 11 disks in CompuCraft's extensive Mac Art Library.

The entire library fits in a classy easel that holds disks in two staggered columns. Each disk label shows an example of the disk's artwork and lists the category covered. It would have helped if CompuCraft had provided a pictorial directory of each disk, but there is at least one advantage to finding artwork for yourself: discount "coupons" for future releases are hidden on several disks.

Categories include "Geography," "Sports," "Buildings," "Tools" and "Signs & Symbols." The disks include small artwork and borders that spice up a newsletter, plus larger art that works better for flyers and bulletins. Unfortunately, like other clip art collections, there is a shortage of "people" artwork.

Mac Art Library works with just an internal drive, but an external drive eases copying and pasting clip art into MacPaint documents. Since the art is not protected, the entire library may be copied onto double-sided disks to save space.

I recently have started publishing bulletins that combine MacWrite documents with MacPaint images. The quality and variety of the artwork in the excellent and affordable Mac Art Library has made my attempt at electronic publishing look much more professional than would otherwise have been possible.

Joe Farace is a writer and photographer from Denver. He is a contributing editor of PhotoMethods *magazine and his reviews of Macintosh software will appear in an upcoming book from Arrays Inc.*

Trademarks: Apple, Macintosh, Macintosh Plus, MacPaint, ImageWriter and LaserWriter, (Apple Computer Inc.); Mac Art Library (CompuCraft).

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Exact

Lets Any Word Processor Do Math and Scientific Typesetting

Technical Support Software Inc.
72 Kent St.
Brookline, MA 02146
617/734-4130

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatibles (system must conform to the IBM PC's BIOS).
Operating Systems: PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher.
Media: Requires one double-sided diskette drive; two diskette drives or a hard disk are preferred configurations.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: Color or monochrome graphics display (supports CGA-compatible cards, EGA-compatible cards and Hercules Card); graphics-capable dot-matrix or laser printer (defaults to IBM Graphics Printer and "true" compatibles but also has special options for 24-pin dot-matrix, drivers for the HP LaserJet, etc.).
Other Requirements: Minimum 128K RAM; memory-resident Exact program consumes from 45K with five fonts loaded to 128K with 20 fonts loaded.
Optional Items: None.
System used for test: 640K Compaq Deskpro Model 2 with two diskette drives, 20MB IOMEGA Alpha-10 Cartridge Drive Subsystem (Bernoulli Box), Amdek Color 722 RGB monitor, STB Systems EGA Plus video adapter and Epson FX-85 printer; running IBM PC-DOS 2.10.
List Prices: $475 ($5 for demonstration disk); $365.75 with academic quantity discount.

Reviewed by Ernest E. Mau

As a technical communicator, I cannot count the times I have had to include pages of complex mathematical and scientific formulas in my writing. While computerized aids have become available over the past few years, I have never felt satisfied with approaches that made me learn whole new word processors, lacked enough flexibility or imposed cumbersome procedures.

Now, along comes Exact (version 2.4), an upgrade to SuperScript 2.0, which is the solution I have been seeking. The key is that Exact works with any word processor, including my favorites. The supplier guarantees compatibility and offers a full refund for Exact if it doesn't work with a user's word processor. The obvious advantage is that the user continues to work with his or her preferred word processor and all its familiar commands, features and performance.

Exact is loaded into memory, with user-selected "active" type fonts, before starting the word processor. It stays resident in memory until needed.

When a formula or other complex expression is needed, a keystroke suspends the word processor and pops Exact's editor onto the screen. Using special commands and formatting instructions, the formula or expression is keyed in, appearing as a straightforward character string at the screen's bottom and in a fully formatted graphic display above. When satisfied with the results, which can be many lines long and as simple or complicated as the user wants, tapping a key returns to the word processor, and tapping another key "injects" the command string into the document. When the document is output with the word processor's normal print functions while Exact is resident, Exact intercepts the commands and prints the fully formed expression using bit-mapped graphics.

Simple as that sounds, Exact is a highly sophisticated program with staggering capabilities. Users familiar with its commands can bypass the editor and type the character strings directly into text. Existing lines or blocks can be extracted, modified with the Exact editor and reinjected into the text.

A previewing capability with varying enlargements can intercept the word processor's print function and display fully formatted pages on screen without wasting paper. The user can specify printing in "quick" mode (fast but low quality), "publication" mode (slower but highly detailed) and "source" mode (outputting unformatted command strings). Exact even lets the user employ graphics for all printing or mix regular text printing with graphics applied just where needed.

Best of all, Exact automatically does things that often are tedious and time consuming in other systems. It automatically sizes parentheses, brackets and braces to include whatever lines are needed by embedded expressions. It automatically centers numerators and denominators in fractions and extends the lines to exact lengths needed. It extends radical symbols to precisely cover included expressions, and it properly positions limits of summation above and below sigma symbols or limits of integration adjacent to integral signs. It can draw boxes around elements, and makes multilevel or nested superscripts and subscripts a breeze. All these and more are done without the user ever making a calculation, counting pixels or measuring anything.

Exact even has an easily used font editor accessory for designing new fonts or changing characters in any font provided.

There are so many document, character, line, block, output and spacing commands combined with special characters like Greek letters, math symbols, italics, boldface and other features that I can't imagine a mathematical expression Exact will not handle.

Users can expect to spend considerable time learning the commands and becoming proficient with them. Exact is not difficult to learn, but there is a lot to it. An excellent but too brief tutorial helps; however, it leaves many things uncovered until the user needs them and looks up the particulars in the reference chapters.

The only difficulty I experienced was in sometimes having to fine tune horizontal and vertical spacing between formulas or between a formula and text. I was a little unnerved by occasional losses of accuracy in page breaks shown by my word processor, but practice and creative spacing soon took care of that.

I could not find any bugs in Exact. Whenever I thought I found one, it turned out to be operator error. I did have a problem with Exact locking out the memory-resident Webster's New World On-Line Thesaurus (Simon & Schuster), but it didn't conflict with Word Finder (Writing Consultants).

Although Exact is nothing less than great, it is too pricey for casual users. Yet anyone heavily into mathematical and scientific documentation will pay back the cost quickly in time savings alone.

Ernest E. Mau, a full-time free-lance writer and Online Today *reviews editor, is based in Aurora, Colo. He is the author of several books and nearly 300 articles on microcomputer products and applications.*

Trademarks: Alpha-10, IOMEGA and Bernoulli Box (IOMEGA Corp.); Compaq and Deskpro (Compaq Computer Corp.); EGA Plus (STB Systems Inc.); Epson and Epson FX (Epson America Inc.); Exact and TSSI (Technical Support Software Inc.); IBM, PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and PC-DOS (International Business Machines Corp.); MS-DOS (Microsoft Inc.).

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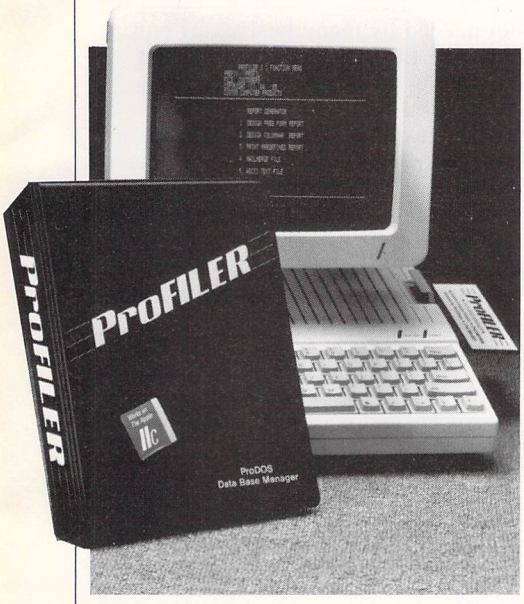

ProFILER

A ProDOS Database Manager

PM Software
17610 Beach Blvd., #29
P.O. Box 1788
Huntington Beach, CA 92647
800/628-2828 Ext. 530

Computers: Apple II Plus, IIe and IIc.
Operating System: Apple ProDOS.
Media: Requires a single diskette drive.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: One diskette drive.
Other Requirements: Minimum 64K RAM.
Optional Items: 80-column Videx or equivalent display adapter in any slot; Apple IIe 80-column card; printer with suitable interface card in any slot; hard disk.
System used for test: Apple IIe with Apple color monitor and Epson FX-85 printer.
List Price: $99.95

Reviewed by Brian D. Monahan

ProFILER 2.1 is among the growing number of software packages that take advantage of the ProDOS operating system. The program includes both a database manager and a report generator. It will run with either floppy or hard disks, and multiple files can be stored on a floppy disk. With the compressed format the program uses, a single floppy disk can store up to 1,500 records.

Creating ProFILER forms is easy. The development process is menu-driven, with a page-oriented approach similar to PFS: series programs. The actual forms into which data will be entered are created through a full-screen editor, and mistakes in form design can be corrected easily. Although some Control-key sequences used as editing commands are slightly obscure, they can be identified easily by asking for help with [CONTROL-Q]. An outstanding feature is the program's ability to change a form design after records have been entered into the database.

Data entry also is easy. The program offers the attractive option of permitting the user to set certain fields as fixed so their values can be carried forward. Thus, if all entries are from the same ZIP code area, that field could be fixed and would not have to be typed for each record. However, one criticism of the data entry process is the program's inability to provide error-checking of input.

Searching and sorting traditionally are the most important functions of a database manager. ProFILER lets the user select up to three fields for indexing, with one of those always being the first field in the form. Those fields will be arranged in sorted order, and the program does allow the indexing fields to be changed.

Searching with ProFILER is easy and efficient. Using the indexed fields, there are two ways of searching. One may choose to leaf through the file record by record. That option displays records based on values in the first field or based on values in one of the two indexed fields (if such indexed fields have previously been identified). While leafing through the file, it is possible to edit, delete or print records. Searching also can be done with a "Select By Field" option, where searches can use either numeric or string values and string values can take advantage of various wild card options.

ProFILER's report generator is outstanding. Beginners can easily print forms that duplicate the screen design. Those with more experience can take advantage of an impressive array of options. The user can choose columnar or free-form reports. The columnar option is ideal for handling numbers, while the freeform option provides flexibility usually found only in more sophisticated and expensive programmable databases. Finally, report forms may be saved for later use with the same file or with a different file.

A utility program that previously was sold separately now is included with ProFILER. With that utility, one can merge data files, transfer records to new files, duplicate form designs and read data from "foreign" files. The program can output textfiles readable by AppleWorks and also has an AppleWriter II Mail Merge for generating mailing lists. Another optional utility is available from the developer for $39.95 and converts PFS: files to ProFILER format.

ProFILER provides the type of excellent documentation often found only with more expensive software. The manual is packaged attractively in a loose-leaf binder and follows a tutorial format that makes it easy to learn the program. Index tabs let experienced users find needed information quickly, while an appendix provides users with an introduction to ProDOS and explains differences between that operating system and DOS 3.3.

ProFILER is an effective database manager. It takes good advantage of the capabilities inherent in the ProDOS operating system. While ProFILER does not include some sophisticated programming options of database programs like dBase III, it is a fairly priced program that provides an excellent combination of power and ease of use. Those seeking a database manager for home or professional use will not quickly outgrow ProFILER.

Brian D. Monahan is an associate professor of computer science at Iona College in New Rochelle, N.Y. He has published dozens of articles on computing in scholarly and popular journals.

Trademarks: Apple, Apple II, Appleworks, Applewriter II, ProDOS, ProFILER (Apple Computer Inc.); dBase III (Ashton-Tate); PFS: (Software Publishing Corp.); ProFILER 2.1 (Custom Computer Products).

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ONLINE TODAY

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Keep Track of Money with MoneyTrack

Pacific Data Systems Inc.
1380 Piper Dr.
Milpitas, CA 95035
213/559-8713 or 800/343-9194

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT and all computers using MS-DOS or PC-DOS.
Operating System: MS-DOS or PC-DOS 2.0 or later.
Media: Requires two 360K disk drives or one floppy and one hard disk.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: None.
Other Requirements: Minimum 128K RAM.
Optional Items: Printer.
System used for test: 640K Compaq Portable Computer with two 360K double-sided, double-density floppy disks and Epson RX-80 printer.
List Price: $295

Reviewed by Harry Green

Let's be honest. Most of us have more number-crunching hardware than the accounting departments of decent-sized businesses of a few years ago, but our personal finances are run from a shoebox full of receipts.

I decided long ago that it was too much trouble to keep records on a personal computer for three sideline businesses, namely free-lance writing, rental property and teaching. Business receipts and expenditures go in a manual ledger, tax deductible personal expenses go in another, and non-deductible personal expenses are something to worry about when the bank account dries up. Part of the drawback to most accounting software is that it does not fit the haphazard bookkeeping of most households.

MoneyTrack attempts to bring order from this chaos. Although it can be used for a small business, so can dozens of other programs. But where others cannot easily handle the diverse transactions of most household accounts, MoneyTrack provides for as many as 99 separate business entities. These are either legal entities with separate systems of account or other entities that operate from a general fund. In my case, I would call one entity "general household" and set up others for writing, teaching and rentals.

MoneyTrack accommodates as many as 99 funds or bank accounts, and more income and expense accounts than most households will ever worry about. All financial transactions are posted to bank account, business entity, and income or expense accounts. In addition, special ledgers can track other expense categories, such as the 1099 forms the IRS requires for payments of more than $600 for personal services. The variety of different codes makes a complex input form, but that is the price of MoneyTrack's flexibility.

The initial menu is a formidable list of choices that fill an entire screen. The menu is logically designed, so most people should have little difficulty figuring it out. Help screens can be called with function keys to describe entry fields or to list valid entries for any field on the form.

The program makes minimum use of technical accounting terms. The use of "increase" and "decrease" might set an accountant's teeth on edge, but people who confuse debits and credits will find it a welcome relief. You do not have to be an accountant to create the chart of accounts. MoneyTrack's tutorial includes a chart of accounts for a family with more complex business entanglements than most of us will ever encounter. The program instructs you how to select the accounts you want and delete the rest. If you know something about accounting, you can create the chart of accounts in less than an hour. The main drawback is that the program has a fixed account numbering scheme. If you already have a numbering system, you will have to revise it to fit MoneyTrack.

MoneyTrack provides an effective way of monitoring nagging financial details we all seem to neglect. Different expense categories can be tracked and compared to budgets. A report shows expenditures for the year by account and compares them to budgetary amounts you enter. The program also provides data for reconciling checking account balances. If the accounts do not balance, an audit report lists all transactions for a specified period. The program prints checks on command and also can print labels for payees. Data can be extracted from the master file for massaging with Lotus 1-2-3, VisiCalc or Multiplan. All customary accounting reports are computed, and listings of account balances by general ledger account, fund or line of business are available.

MoneyTrack will not meet the financial needs of everyone. For some people, it still is easier to throw receipts in a cigar box and sort everything out on April 14. For straight business accounting, MoneyTrack provides features that are not needed by many businesses but lacks the flexibility of open account numbering and subaccount coding.

Large businesses probably will want a more conventional accounting system, but MoneyTrack will fit small businesses that do not want to pay a consultant or CPA to create an accounting system. It should be most useful to persons whose financial affairs share common bank accounts and tax returns and are in need of organization.

Harry Green is president of Pacific Netcom Inc., a Portland, Ore., firm that consults with businesses on using office automation and telecommunications to improve productivity. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,431.

Trademarks: Compaq (Compaq Computer Corp.); Epson and RX-80 (Epson America Inc.); IBM, IBM PC, PC-XT and PC-DOS (International Business Machines Corp.); Lotus and 1-2-3 (Lotus Development Corp.); MoneyTrack (Pacific Data Systems Inc.); MS-DOS and Multiplan (Microsoft Corp.); VisiCalc (VisiCorp).

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Plans 'n Totals:

Business Planning Software

Resource N Corp.
66 Commonwealth Ave.
Concord, MA 01742
617/264-4450

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatibles.
Operating Systems: PC-DOS and MS-DOS version 2.1 and higher.
Media: Requires at least one double-sided diskette drive.
Copy Protection: Protection scheme allows one floppy disk backup and two hard disk installations.
Required Peripherals: 132-column printer or 80-column printer with 132-column condensed mode.
Other Requirements: Minimum 512K RAM.
Optional Items: Hard disk recommended.
System used for test: 640K IBM PC-XT with IBM black-and-white monitor, IBM monochrome display and printer adapter, two diskette drives, Maynard 20MB hard disk and Okidata Microline 84 printer; running PC-DOS 2.1.
List Prices: $195, $395 or $695, depending on level required.

Reviewed by William J. Lynott

When it comes to working with numbers, spreadsheets are hard to beat. The latest versions of programs such as

Lotus 1-2-3 and Framework are sophisticated enough to handle almost any number-crunching task around, including business planning and forecasting. However, learning to use spreadsheets for complex applications can be a major project in itself. Most spreadsheet beginners need months of study and practice before being able to design and create templates for advanced applications.

Plans 'n Totals offers one way around this problem for business people who want to use a computer for planning and forecasting without investing a great deal of time in learning to use spreadsheets.

Plans 'n Totals is a menu-driven program that makes use of context-sensitive help screens. It will generate reports such as budgets, forecasts, cash flow projections, income statements and balance sheets on quarterly, yearly and five-year bases. Among other reports available are gross margin analysis, break even analysis and department budgets. Either manufacturing or service/retail formats may be selected to match the structure of a business.

The program begins its work by prompting for both forecast and reference data. You will be asked to supply specific historical data about your business and then to make assumptions about such things as interest and tax rates over the forecast period. You also have to supply your own forecasts on such things as direct labor costs and inflation rates. While the default is set for accrual accounting, changing to a cash basis is simple.

Once Plans 'n Totals has all input data it needs, you can use its well-designed menu system to call any reports or forecasts the program provides.

The methods used for forecasting as well as the thoroughness and flexibility of Plans 'n Totals should satisfy even the most jaded comptroller. Expense and income categories are meticulously defined, and you may choose to ignore parts of the program that do not apply to specific tasks you have in mind. A department manager, for example, could bypass sections dealing with corporate tax planning. If you do not intend to sell capital stock in the company, that section may be ignored. For manufacturing companies, analyses of specific products extends right down to material costs, direct labor costs, factory overhead burden rates, work in process time and finished goods time.

There is no doubt that the typical business user will master Plans 'n Totals in much less time than it would take to learn to produce the same results on a spreadsheet; however, the program is not as easy to learn and use as its literature suggests.

The documentation is not well organized. Introductory material provides some good refreshers, but you have to work your way to Chapter 11 before finding instructions for program use. The basic tutorial is buried at the end of the manual. In spots, general text on business planning is mixed with operating instructions, making for some confusion. Although the program is available in three versions for small, medium and large businesses, I was not able to find any guidelines for choosing the right version for a particular business. Of course, purchasers of level I or II can upgrade if they find the need.

While you do not have to be a computer expert to learn and use this program, I would not suggest it for a rank beginner. You certainly are not going to learn it in the "less than one hour" claimed in the manual.

To gain maximum benefit in a reasonable period of time, you should already know your way around both your computer and the general concepts of business accounting and planning. Plans 'n Totals has a big appetite for statistical data involving company operations, and you will have to do some homework to gather it all. Nevertheless, if you are willing and able to make the effort, Plans 'n Totals will provide sophistication in business planning that would otherwise be out of reach for most small enterprises.

William J. Lynott is president of W.J. Lynott Associates, a management consulting firm in suburban Philadelphia. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,420.

Trademarks: Framework (Ashton-Tate); IBM, IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and PC-DOS (International Business Machines Corp.); Lotus, Lotus 1-2-3 and Symphony (Lotus Development Corp.); MS-DOS (Microsoft Inc.); Okidata Microline (Okidata Div. of Oki America Inc.); Plans 'n Totals (Resource N Corp.).

GO EBB or circle 21 on the Reader Service Form.

Electronic Edition Software Reviews

The following reviews are available this month on *Online Today Electronic Edition* by typing GO OLT-230 at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

The Handlers Integrated Apple Software
Manufacturer: *Advanced Logic Systems Inc.*
Computers: *Apple II, II+, IIe or IIc*

Megabucks Stock Market Investment Program
Manufacturer: *Nimrod Software Co.*
Computers: *IBM PC, PC-XT and compatibles*

ZeroDisk Copy Protection Bypass Utility
Manufacturer: *Quaid Software, Ltd.*
Computers: *IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatibles*

Microsoft Word 3.0 Word Processor
Manufacturer: *Microsoft Corp.*
Computers: *IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatibles*

RightWriter 2.0 Writing Style Analyzer
Manufacturer: *DecisionWare Inc.*
Computers: *IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatibles*

DoubleDOS Multitasking Control System
Manufacturer: *SoftLogic Solutions Inc.*
Computers: *IBM PC, PC-XT, and compatibles*

Turbo Prolog Artificial Intelligence Programming
Manufacturer: *Borland International*
Computers: *IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT, Portable PC, 3270 PC, PCjr or "true" compatible*

Diagraph and Freelance Presentation Graphics
Manufacturers: *Computer Support Corp. and Graphic Communications Inc.*
Computers: *IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and fully compatible computers; Diagraph also available for HP computers*

Vcache Disk Accelerator
Manufacturer: *Golden Bow Systems*
Computers: *IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and 100 percent compatibles*

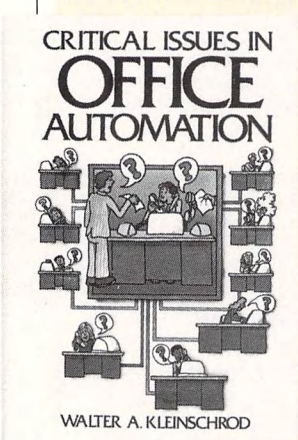
Fontrix Graphics Software
Manufacturer: *Data Transforms Inc.*
Computers: *IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and 100 percent compatibles; also available for Apple computers*

Norton Commander Hard Disk Organizer And Control Program
Manufacturer: *Peter Norton Computing Inc.*
Computers: *IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and true compatibles*

Critical Issues in Office Automation

By Walter A. Kleinschrod
McGraw-Hill, 1986
223 pages, $28.95 (hardcover)
Reviewed by William J. Lynott

Critical Issues in Office Automation is a far more readable book than its somewhat ponderous title would suggest. The author, the former editor of *Office Administration and Automation* magazine, writes in the sort of conversational tone that looks easy but is, in fact, a relatively rare talent. He also brings an expertise to his subject that is evident from the opening pages.



Kleinschrod has not only a knowledge of the technology involved in office automation but also a keen understanding of the people problems that can develop.

Writing a book on office automation must surely be a singularly difficult job, since it can be a challenge to find two people who agree on what office automation is or even what it means. Despite this obvious problem, the book is a success. Kleinschrod brings not only a broad knowledge of the technology involved in office automation to his work, but also a keen understanding of the people problems that can develop when major changes in work environment are thrust upon a group of workers.

Critical Issues in Office Automation is skillfully built around the major issues that must be dealt with in the task of keeping up with changing technology. In Chapter 1, titled "Issues . . . What issues?," you will find an insightful look into the broad changes that automation is bringing into the concept of what an office is and what it is supposed to accomplish. In this chapter, you will be introduced to the author's interpretations of what office automation is and what it

Each of the remaining nine chapters addresses a major problem area in office automation. Chapter 2, for example is entitled, "Issues of 'Does It Pay?'." In a refreshingly irreverent tone, the author debunks some of the pat theories you may have heard about how much money you will surely save if you only will install the latest equipment. While his thesis does indeed support the notion that office automation will pay its own way, he provides a more realistic look at the economic considerations than some you may have seen.

The remaining chapters deal in a similar fashion with such topics as how to automate, the impact you can expect in the workplace, the concerns involved in changing technology, security problems in automated offices, longer term issues of concern to management and world and social issues.

Critical Issues in Office Automation will not be of much interest to the casual reader. It is intended instead as a source of knowledge and help for personnel executives, managers and others who must learn to deal effectively with the issues involved in modern office automation. If this means you, this book is worth your consideration.

William J. Lynott is president of W.J. Lynott Associates, a management consulting firm in suburban Philadelphia. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,420.

Linking Microcomputers

Edited by Colin B. Ungaro
McGraw-Hill, 1986
310 pages, $26.95 (softcover)
Reviewed by James Moran

Linking Microcomputers is an anthology of articles that have been published in *Data Communications* magazine. This book covers many of the issues involved in networking microcomputers both to other micros and to mainframe computers. Divided into the five sections of Technology, Networking, Planning and Management, Software, and Applications, this anthology examines a range of networking possibilities.

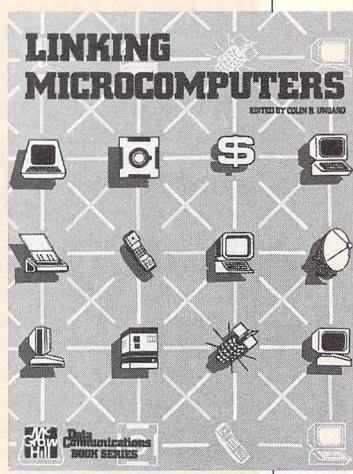
The Technology section consists of articles published as early as 1981. Like the other sections in the book, the most recent articles date back to 1985. This is somewhat unfortunate because a number of "standards" have evolved within the past two years. Be that as it may, these articles explain the basic theory of microcomputer networking, including discussions on micro to mainframe connections, standards, protocols and document exchange on SNA networks.

Networking is discussed in a short section that examines strategies for linking microcomputers, micro connections to networks and integrating micros into office networks. Those not familiar with the connection of computers to networks will find the discussions enlightening and, possibly, useful in suggesting strategies for using networks.

The Planning and Management section is the largest in the anthology and covers everything from selecting software to network security. The information contained here is specific and builds upon the more theoretical information presented in the first two sections.

The last two sections of *Linking Microcomputers*, Software and Applications, contain articles that are general in tone. For the most part, there are no specific suggestions regarding brand names. However, readers will find some specific case histories that illuminate the trials and tribulations of choosing software.

***Linking Microcomputers* provides a wide view of micro networks and some essential strategies for constructing or entering a network.**



Linking Microcomputers provides a solid information base for users who are considering networks for the first time. It provides a wide view of micro networks and provides some essential strategies for constructing or entering a network. Even though more recent information is available, readers will find this book to be an excellent reference source.

James Moran is a free-lance writer and frequent contributor to Online Today. *His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,2253.*

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Fort Lauderdale News & Sun-Sentinel
Houston Post
Gilroy Dispatch
Knickerbocker News
Lexington Herald-Leader
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Wichita Eagle-Beacon

VU/TEXT from Knight-Ridder is the nation's leading archive for the electronic re-distribution of U.S. metropolitan daily newspapers. Its files include over 30 of the most innovative papers in the country, many with archives since 1980, all as current as yesterday.

During the month of November, charges for keyword searches you conduct in the archives of any of the above papers will be waived. (A typical search is $7.00). Don't overlook this extraordinary opportunity to experiment with the power and scope of news retrieval:

- research business initiatives
- prepare academic papers
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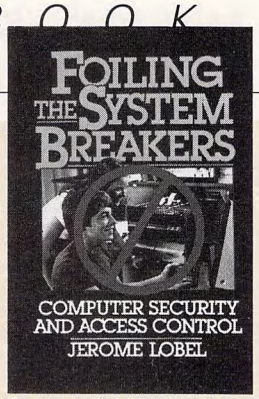
To access VU/TEXT type GO IQUEST at any ! prompt.

* Search charges for VU/TEXT databases are waived from November 1-30. Base connect time charges are in effect.

BOOK REVIEW



The book is well written and it fully examines subjects as diverse as computer fraud, technological espionage and software piracy.

Foiling the System Breakers:

Computer Security Access and Control

By Jerome Lobel
McGraw-Hill, 1986
292 pages, $34.95 (softcover)
Reviewed by James Moran

Walt didn't get *all* the bad guys to don costumes and lend atmosphere to the "Pirates of the Caribbean" attraction at Walt Disney World. Some of the real-world variety are alive and all too well — breaking into computer networks across the country. If your commercial or personal computer is ever online, its files may be the next ones that are scuttled.

In *Foiling the System Breakers*, Jerome Lobel has focused 17 years of experience — as a lecturer, teacher and manager of computer security at Honeywell Information Systems — into a full treatment on computer security and access control.

The mood is set in the introduction. For those who think that electronic break-ins of computers are relatively harmless pranks of fun-loving teenagers, Lobel relates the story of the 414s, so-called because of the Milwaukee telephone area code from which they operated. These darlings of the beer capital broke into 60 major computer installations, including the Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. The latter installation contained 6,000 computerized therapy records of current and former patients. The point of the opening story is that when large, sophisticated operations can be entered surreptitiously, the time has come to learn and implement procedures to protect your computer operations whether they be office or home-based.

The subtitle of this book is *Computer Security and Access Control*. Not all unauthorized access will occur through telephone lines. The author alerts legitimate users to access control problems in whatever manner they may occur. But, there is no doubt that communications capabilities create a gateway for unauthorized computer access, and much of the book is dedicated to examining this weak link in computer security.

For commercial operations, the book examines the establishment of a system security policy. There are, for instance, a number of laws that require certain categories of data to be protected with civil and criminal penalties for those who inadequately safeguard certain types of information. All this is to say that access security can be necessary for reasons other than keeping an overactive teenager from breaking into your commercial system.

Foiling the System Breakers becomes specific as it investigates the tools for restricting access. Specific suggestions are made for security and control. Complete examinations, including recognized weaknesses, are made of access control software and hardware, database and network security and data encryption.

Personal computer users may be surprised to find that their systems are among the most difficult to protect. Controlling access is difficult but not impossible. Unfortunately, the best protection will make these helpful machines less convenient to work with. However, for those who feel they must take precautionary steps to safeguard their personal computers, this book examines quite a few pertinent security methods.

Foiling the System Breakers is devoted to a wide range of security topics. It is well written and fully examines subjects as diverse as computer fraud, technological espionage and software piracy. Detailed suggestions are offered for solving the security concerns of all computer users.

James Moran is a free-lance writer and frequent contributor to Online Today. *His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,2253.*

ONLINE TODAY

Looking for Some Good Reading?

You'll find more computer book reviews in *Online Today Electronic Edition*. Just type GO OLT from any prompt in CompuServe and choose "Product Reviews" from the main menu.

Secrets of MacPaint, MacWrite and MacDraw

By David D. Busch
Little, Brown and Co., 1986
190 pages, $13.95 (softcover)
Reviewed by Joe Farace

After two and a half years, you would think that MacPaint, MacWrite and MacDraw wouldn't have any secrets left to write about. Dave Busch didn't think so and has compiled 114 hints and shortcuts in this neat little book.

If you are the kind of person who opens Christmas presents on the first of December, you will want to turn immediately to Appendix B. You will find all of the "secrets" in the book listed in numerical order. But if you give in to temptation and do this, you will miss the author's explanations and demonstrations of the "secrets," which are a big part of the book's usefulness.

Of course, not all of the "secrets" are all that secret. For example, Secret #1 states, "Make stick-on labels for your keyboard with the word 'constrain' or a suitable abbreviation, and place them on the front surface of either Shift key." Yecch! You can do this if you like, and undoubtedly using this technique may help you learn some of Busch's techniques faster, but this "secret" sounds more like mental training wheels to me. Secret # 2, which is about Fat Bits, is more practical and useful.

The section on MacWrite is the weakest, probably because there are not many good secrets left to uncover. The sections on MacDraw and MacPaint are good, but still suffer from what I call the "101 things to do with your computer" syndrome. For example, Secret #88 says, "Relieve the tedium by making your own signs for doors, windows, offices, even streets and the sides of buildings." Making a banner or sign every now and then may be fun, but that is not why I bought my computer.

In the the last section, called "Some space age tools for MacPaint, MacDraw and MacWrite," the author mentions that he has been using a pre-release version of Apple's Switcher utility. The fact that Switcher has gone through many "official" updates in the past year makes me think that the book is slightly older than its 1986 copyright may indicate. This last part of the book contains a few tips — no secrets — on using Switcher, RAM disks and clip art. It is not an in-depth look at these tools, but will provide a good introduction for the beginner.

All in all, if you are a die-hard Macintosh user with stacks of software and books, *Secrets of MacPaint, MacWrite and MacDraw* is not for you. If you are a new Mac owner, however, the book will be a big help in cutting through some of the jargon and computerese associated with using a new computer. Since *Secrets* is so easy and fun to read, it is the perfect poolside computer book.

Joe Farace is a writer and photographer from Denver. He is a contributing editor of PhotoMethods *magazine and his reviews of Macintosh software will appear in an upcoming book from Arrays Inc.*

Command Performance:

Lotus 1-2-3

By Eddie Adamis
Microsoft Press, 1986
395 pages, $24.95 (softcover)
Reviewed by Harry Green

There are some books you buy, read once and sell at the next garage sale. There are others you read from cover to cover and retain because they may be handy in the future. There are still others that you never read all the way through but you keep them in easy reach because you need them almost every day. The dictionary is such a book. So is *Command Performance: Lotus 1-2-3*, an alphabetically indexed guide to 1-2-3 commands, functions and operations.

I have owned 1-2-3 for about three years, and there are commands I have never used, not because of lack of need, but because when I find a procedure that works I tend to neglect others that may be more efficient. I suspect there are many people who don't use more than a fraction of the power of 1-2-3 because it is too time-consuming to dig through the manual for a better way to handle a problem. *Command Performance* is an antidote to slipshod use of 1-2-3 because it makes it easy to edge forward into menus that might otherwise be left unexplored.

Every 1-2-3 command is thoroughly documented with information on how the command works, what results to expect, and a picture of the menu that selects it. Most commands are illustrated with a short example. Unlike other 1-2-3 books, the examples are not necessarily designed to demonstrate an application but are intended to illustrate the command itself. Sample screens and menus show how the results are achieved. The book primarily focuses on Release 2 of 1-2-3, but differences between earlier releases are clearly defined.

The major operational features of the program are explained in some detail. For example, 18 pages are devoted to explaining the elements of macro commands. Although entire books have been written about macros, the detail in this one is about right for someone who needs a quick reference on how to express the arguments. Other major features, such as graphing, file handling, and using a database, are explained in similar detail.

The book is professionally written and cleverly cross-referenced. Where Lotus provides commands that complement or supplement the one being described, these are cross-referenced with a star and page number in boldface.

The outstanding feature of this book is its organization. Even though it does not explain fundamental spreadsheet concepts, beginners will find it useful. If you have some familiarity with 1-2-3, *Command Performance* will be invaluable. If you are already accomplished, the book will help you to get the command syntax just right, and will help illuminate the murky corners of the program. This book is recommended highly to anyone who is more than a casual user of Lotus 1-2-3.

Harry Green is president of Pacific Netcom Inc., a Portland, Ore., firm that consults with businesses on using office automation and telecommunications to improve productivity. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,431.

Electronic Edition Book Reviews

The following book reviews are available this month on *Online Today Electronic Edition* by typing GO OLT-240 at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

Managing with dBase III, *by Michael J. Clifford, Sams Books*

Safety Catch, *by Jaron Summers, Leisure Books*

Running Your Business with Excel, *by Amanda C. Hixon, Osborne/McGraw-Hill*

The Essential Commodore 128 User's Guide, *by Jerry Willis, HP Books*

The MS-DOS Handbook, *by Richard Allen King, Sybex*

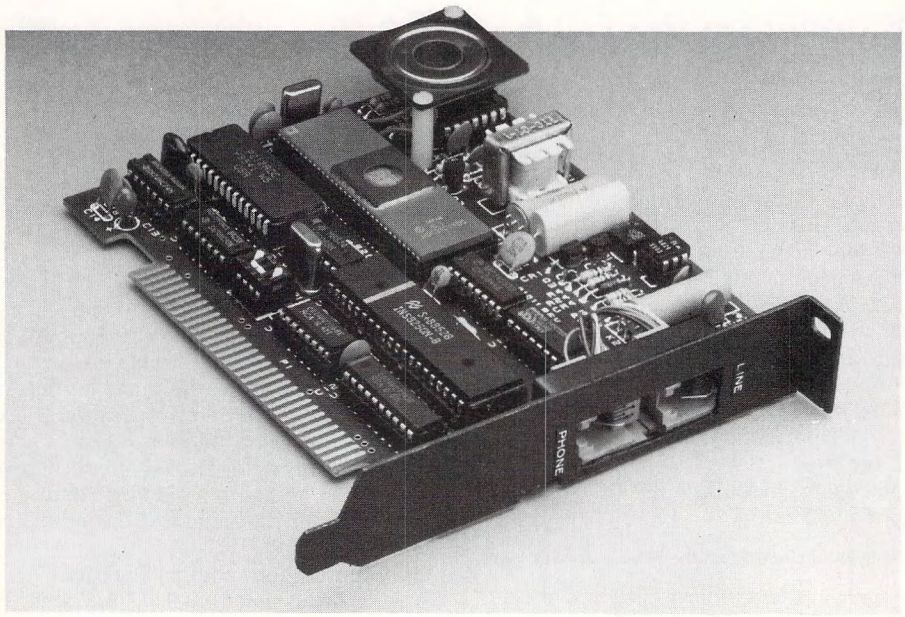
AI-Based Modem

A new modem based on artificial intelligence technology has been introduced by Adaptive Computer Technologies that is capable of cutting dial-up telephone line costs by up to 60 percent.

The ACT-153 is a full-duplex 212A modem that provides a data transmission speed of 3600 bps over standard 1200 bps asynchronous data lines using innovative transparent data compression techniques. Selling for $820, the unit also includes full CRC-16 error correction resulting in 100 percent error-free transmission over standard communication lines.

For information, contact Adaptive Computer Technologies, 97 Boston Ave., Suite 103, San Jose, CA 95128. 408/279-3993.

GO EBB or circle 24 on the Reader Service Form.



Smartcom Upgrade

Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc. has released Smartcom II, Version 2.2, upgrading its Apple Macintosh communications software to provide Option Key Autopilot sequences, Auto Startup sequences and Received File naming capabilities.

The program also supports the Macintosh Plus and the Hierarchical File System, providing improved file handling and organization for faster, more efficient access, update and transfer. Retail price is $149. Programs will be updated for $25.

For information, contact Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc., P.O. Box 105203, Atlanta, GA 30348. 404/449-8791.

GO EBB or circle 25 on the Reader Service Form.

PC-XT and PC-AT Lookalikes

CompuMart Inc. has introduced the Fountain XT and ALR AT, IBM PC-XT and PC-AT lookalikes.

Selling for $499, the Fountain XT includes a 135-watt power supply, 5150 style keyboard, one floppy drive and 256K. The ALR AT retails for $1,599 and features several serial and parallel ports, 6/8 MHz switchability and up to 2MB on the motherboard.

For information, contact CompuMart Inc., 11815 Forestgate Dr., Dallas, TX 75243. 214/690-5151.

GO EBB or circle 26 on the Reader Service Form.

VOLKsi Modem

Anchor Automation has introduced the VOLKsi, a new add-in card member of its Volksmodem family of personal computer modems.

The half-card, auto-dial/answer modem is designed for the IBM PC family and compatibles and sells for $199. Bundled with Access communications software, the modem operates at 1200 or 300 bps and permits unattended or manual data transmission. In addition, it fully supports the Hayes Smartmodem command set and operates with most communications software packages.

For information, contact Anchor Automation Inc., 6913 Valjean Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91406. 818/997-7758.

GO EBB or circle 27 on the Reader Service Form.

FileXchange

A communication package for the IBM PC, FileXchange, instantly transfers personal computer files among geographically dispersed offices.

Introduced by McDonnell Douglas, FileXchange users can send personal computer files using a modem and a hard-wire connection to the TYMNET network. File recipients can retrieve files via FileXchange at their convenience. The program allows users to determine in advance the number of characters being transmitted and the amount of time the transfer will take, enabling costs to be estimated before a file transfer is initiated. Designed for the IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatibles, FileXchange is available for a subscription rate of $300 per month.

For information, contact McDonnell Douglas Applied Communications Systems Co., 20705 Valley Green Dr., Cupertino, CA 95014. 800/435-8880, ext. 62.

GO EBB or circle 28 on the Reader Service Form.

Pop-Up Telecommunications

SideTalk from Lattice Inc. is a new package of specialized telecommunications programs plus a complete communications programming language.

Programs included retrieve electronic mail, schedule automatic data transfers, set up a bulletin board system and more. SideTalk can be used as a memory-resident or stand-alone program and can be managed from the menus or from a command line. It features multitasking operation allowing users' telecommunications to be managed independently while the computer performs other tasks. Retail price is $119.95. It works with most Hayes-compatible modems and requires MS-DOS or PC-DOS 2.0 or higher.

For information, contact Lattice Inc., P.O. Box 3072, Glen Ellyn, IL 60138. 312/858-7950.

GO EBB or circle 29 on the Reader Service Form.

Modem on the Edge

Leading Edge has introduced the Model "L" Series 1200B Modem, which includes Bitcom software and a 24 month warranty.

Priced at $149.95, the half-card Model "L" is Hayes-compatible and fits easily into the Leading Edge Model "D" Personal Computer, the IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatibles in full or half-size slots. Features include COM1 through COM4 addressability, auto-dial/answer, compatibility with most software packages and speeds of 300 and 1200 bps.

For information, contact Leading Edge Products Inc., 21 Highland Circle, Needham, MA 02194. 800/USA-LEAD or 617/828-8150.

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All Aboard!

All Aboard is a new all-purpose multifunction board from IDEAssociates Inc. that provides all essential IBM PC-XT computing capabilities on one full-length board, occupying just one slot.

All Aboard combines IBM enhanced graphics adapter or IBM mono/color graphics, up to 2MB of expanded memory, serial, parallel ports and clock and a hard-disk controller on one card. Surface mount technology increases functionality while reducing space requirements. Prices range from $545 to $995.

For information, contact IDEAssociates Inc., 35 Dunham Rd., Billerica, MA 01821. 617/663-6878.

GO EBB or circle 31 on the Reader Service Form.

File Minder

Finch Inc. has introduced File Minder, a comprehensive file storage management system for the IBM PC and compatible computers.

File Minder is a window-oriented file utility system providing a comprehensive collection of tagging functions and sophisticated commands including copy, rename, delete, squeeze, unsqueeze, archive, view, print, directory map, procedure generator, disk cataloging and control commands for four DOS file attributes. Retail price is $69.50.

For more information or to order, contact Finch Inc., P.O. Box 56, Frederick, MD 21701-0056. 301/695-6560.

GO EBB or circle 32 on the Reader Service Form.

Prentice Auto-Dial Modem

A new 1200 bps desktop modem featuring Hayes Smartcom compatibility has been introduced by Prentice Corp.

Called the P212ZX, the modem offers full-duplex, asynchronous operation over switched telephone networks, auto-dial/answer, smart or dumb terminal operation and automatic voice/data switching over the same line during the same call.

For information, contact Prentice Corp., 266 Caspian Dr., P.O. Box 3544. Sunnyvale, CA 94088. 408/734-9810.

GO EBB or circle 33 on the Reader Service Form.

Sharp AT-Compatible

Sharp Electronics Corp. has introduced the PC-7500 personal computer, an AT-compatible desktop model.

Selling for $2,995, the PC-7500 has a full complement of PC-AT features, including an Intel 80286 processor capable of running a either 6MHz or 8MHz clock speed, a combination of double-density or high-density half-height floppy disk drives and 512K of on-board RAM.

For information, contact Sharp Electronics Corp., Systems Division, Sharp Plaza, Mahwah, NJ 07430. 201/529-8971.

GO EBB or circle 34 on the Reader Service Form.

MultiMux

MultiMux from Multi-Tech Systems Inc. is an intelligent statistical multiplexer.

Features include an easy-to-use menu design, AT-like commands and built-in flexibility, allowing it to adapt to a variety of communications environments quickly and efficiently. MultiMuxes are four or eight channel devices that include a built-in 9600 baud modem, flow control, downline parameter loading and monitored priority control.

For information, contact Multi-Tech Systems Inc., 82 Second Ave., New Brighton, MN 55112. 800/328-9717 or 612/631-3550.

GO EBB or circle 35 on the Reader Service Form.

SuperCalc 4

Computer Associates has introduced SuperCalc 4, a new version of its popular integrated spreadsheet program.

The new features address real operational and economic needs of the corporate environment, including enhanced macro capability, a "learn" capability allowing users to build macro commands as they work, user-defined named ranges, full word menu structure, enhanced data file exchange capability and automatic read and write from Lotus 1-2-3 and other ASCII files.

For information, contact Computer Associates International Inc., Micro Products Division, 2195 Fortune Dr., San Jose, CA 95131. 408/942-1727.

GO EBB or circle 36 on the Reader Service Form.

Electronic Edition Product Announcements

The following new product announcements are available this month on *Online Today Electronic Edition* by typing GO OLT-250 at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

A Christmas Adventure, *text and graphics adventure program set in the North Pole, BitCards Inc.*

MenuManager, *a personal computer program organizer for the IBM PC and compatibles, Southern Computer Systems Inc.*

VP-Info, *high-speed database program for the IBM PC and compatibles, Paperback Software International*

Expert Choice, *expert support system for problem solving for the IBM PC and compatibles, Decision Support Software*

VersaPoint Braille Embosser, *Telesensory Systems Inc.*

Cruise Control, *RAM-resident program for navigating large documents and spreadsheets for the IBM PC and compatibles, Revolution Software Inc.*

EDIX (Release 5), *text editor for MS-DOS, UNIX and XENIX operating systems, Emerging Technology Consultants Inc.*

OPUS 2, *ASCII terminal, Esprit Systems*

Logistix, *integrated spreadsheet package for the IBM PC and compatibles, HP 150 and Commodore Amiga, Progressive Peripherals and Software*

Interword, *multilingual word processor for the IBM PC and compatibles, Computer Anyware Inc.*

RATES & INFORMATION

If you have hardware, software or services to offer *Online Today*'s readers, let them know with a low cost Shopper's Guide listing.

For only $85, a listing will tell *Online Today*'s growing readership what is available to improve efficiency, lower costs and increase the enjoyment of personal computing.

Listings are classified in four categories: Software, Services, Consultants and Retailers. As each listing is received, it will be published in the next available issue of *Online Today*.

Each listing costs $85. This covers the general listing information as well as a 40-word description of the product or service. Additional words are $15 for up to 15 words. Listings that run for three or more consecutive issues earn a 10 percent discount. Payment *must* be received with listing information.

The following is a guide to the type of information to include in a listing:

Software:
Product name; author and/or company's name; mailing address; telephone number; CompuServe User ID number; up to 40 words describing your products.

Services:
Type of service; company name; mailing address; telephone number; CompuServe User ID number; up to 40 words describing your services.

Consultants:
Company and individual contact name; mailing address; telephone number; CompuServe User ID number; up to 40 words describing your products and services.

Retailers:
Company name; individual contact name; mailing address; telephone number; CompuServe User ID number; up to 40 words describing your products and services.

You may use the enclosed card when ordering your ad or mail your information with payment to *Online Today* Shopper's Guide, P.O. Box 639, Columbus, Ohio 43216-0639.

SOFTWARE

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C. Gary Olander
322 Haymarket Pl.
Gahanna, OH 43230
614/475-3315 after 5:00 p.m.
CompuServe 74126,3522

The PROBABILITY Lottery program. Select numbers weighted towards the most or least picked in the past drawings, or totally random. Any number lottery, pick 3&4 too. See national reviews in Rainbow (Oct. 85), Computer Shopper (Jan. 86) and PCM (May 86) magazines. MS-DOS IBM AT&T Tandy 1000 and CP/M $29.95, TRS-80 CoCo and Model 3/4 $19.95.

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CompuServe 72105,1363

ORGANIZE YOUR HARD DISK. Tired of wading through confusing manuals? Step-by-step instructions show you how to manage your hard disk. Begin immediately with our MS-DOS help system and library of batch files. On 5¼" disk. $12.50 PP. Free information sheet.

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Profitable telecomputing tips on how to connect with other computers and obtain FREE PROGRAMS; which is the best type modem to buy; what to look for in communications software; and MUCH, MUCH MORE! Makes a great Christmas gift. $19.95 (+$2.55 S&H).

SERVICES

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Readers tell us: (Rob, 29) I've made so many new friends on the Forums (HSX Support Groups). I think of myself as a kind of social misfit in real life. But here I'm so popular that I'm gaining new confidence in the "real" world . . . (Jerry, 34) You solved a problem I have (about inguinal hernia) . . . (Steve, 24) This service has been immensely helpful in helping me understand and overcome premature ejaculation. I followed your suggestions — and they really worked! . . . (Barry, 28) Thanks for all the tips on "How to Meet Women." I followed some of the suggestions and met some terrific women . . . (Louise, 44) I had fun with your "Wordpower" Interactive and learned a lot besides.

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5¼" SSDD Soft Sector w/Hub Ring Retail 10 pack	**6481-KA**	0.48
5¼" Same as above, but bulk pack w/o envelope	**6487-KA**	0.33
5¼" DSDD Soft Sector w/Hub Ring Retail 10 pack	**6491-KA**	0.52
5¼" Same as above, but bulk pack w/o envelope	**6497-KA**	0.37
5¼" DSHD for IBM PC/AT - bulk pack	**6667-KA**	1.29
3½" SSHD (135 TPI) - bulk pack	**6317-KA**	1.09
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SSSD = Single Sided Single Density; SSDD = Single Sided Double Density; DSDD = Double Sided Double Density; DSQD = Double Sided Quad Density; SSHD = Single Sided High Density; DSHD = Double Sided High Density.

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How to order

To get the fastest delivery of your diskettes, phone your order directly to our order desk and charge it to your credit card. Written purchase orders are accepted from approved government agencies and most well rated firms at a 10% surcharge for net 10 billing. For maximum savings, your order should be prepaid. All sales are subject to availability, acceptance and verification. All sales are final. All prices are in U.S. dollars. Prices, terms and specifications are subject to change without notice. No rainchecks on out of stock items. Not responsible for typographical errors. A $5.00 additional handling fee will be charged for all orders with a merchandise total under $50.00. All shipments are F.O.B. CEI warehouse in Ann Arbor, Michigan. No COD's. Non-certified checks require 3 weeks bank clearance. Michigan residents add 4% sales tax or supply your tax ID number and reason for tax exemption.

For **shipping charges** add $6.00 per 100 diskettes and/or any fraction of 100 5¼-inch or 3½-inch diskettes. Add $1.00 per data cartridge or head cleaning kit for U.P.S. ground shipping and handling in the continental U.S. For Canada, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Alaska, or APO/FPO delivery, shipping is *three* times the continental U.S. rate.

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For free information on products or services in this issue of *Online Today*, fill in your name, address, ZIP code and phone number. Then circle the number that corresponds to the number of the advertisement or article in which you are interested.

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November issue, not valid after February 1987.

Use IQuest to Search National Newspapers

The electronic age has produced a number of revelations for the newspaper business, among them that *old* information sometimes is as valuable as today's news.

When a newspaper digitizes its daily issues and preserves them in an electronic database that can be searched quickly, it revitalizes the information and makes it a powerful tool for anyone doing historical research.

Many progressive newspapers have become involved in just such a database project through Knight-Ridder's VU/TEXT service and Data Times Information Network. CompuServe subscribers have access to those good works through the IQuest gateway.

In this column, we'll look at how you can use IQuest to have the resources — the full-texts of more than 30 newspapers — available for your own research.

IQuest is a relatively new service that links CompuServe subscribers to more than 700 databases provided by about a dozen different vendors, including VU/TEXT and Data Times. There actually are two versions of IQuest: IQuest I is a menu-driven system that prompts you for the kind of information you're interested in and then actually assists you in locating a relevant database; IQuest II, designed for more experienced users, lets you directly access a specified database.

To get started with either version, the command is GO IQUEST from any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service. This will display a menu from which you can get background on the system, tips on writing keywords for searching, a list of the names of all the databases available and more.

Also on this menu is an option for accessing IQuest itself. Note that IQuest is an extra-charge service — connect time is billed at base rates with surcharges applied each time you receive information. Once you select the access option, the system will ask which version of IQuest you want to use.

Let's first see how to use menu-driven IQuest I to search for newspaper stories from VU/TEXT.

IQuest I's first menu asks you to specify whether you're looking for a subject, a person, a place or an organization. A subsequent menu asks for the type of information — current events, business, technical, law, education, etc. The magic word for newspapers is "current events."

Once you've chosen the "Current events" menu item, IQuest I will ask whether you want to search international newspapers (such as the Christian Science Monitor, The New York Times and The Washington Post), regional newspapers from various states or international wire services.

If you choose the "Regional newspapers" option, the system displays the names of the states from which it has newspapers online — nearly 20 states were represented in my most recent check.

Then all you have to do is indicate the state you're interested in. If IQuest has more than one newspaper online from that state, it will list them and ask you to choose the one you want to search. For instance, under Texas, IQuest has full-text backlogs of stories from The Austin Daily Texan, The Dallas Morning News, The Houston Chronicle and The Houston Post.

Indicate your choice, and the system will prompt you with, "Enter your specific topic. (Type H for important examples.)" It is here that IQuest needs your keyword or keywords. If you were looking for stories about literature, you might type in the word BOOKS. For other interests, you'd enter COMPUTERS, CHESS or whatever.

About keywords: Usually, you can enter more than one of them, linked with standard "operators," like AND and OR. For example, "BOOKS AND COMPUTERS" would find articles that mention both words, while "CHESS OR CHECKERS" would locate those that mention at least one of your keywords. A "wildcard" — indicated with a slash mark (/) — is permitted, too. For example, by typing BOOK/, you would find articles using such words as "book," "books" and "bookmaking."

Note, too, that the prompt says you can type an H (for Help) to receive examples of keywords in this particular database. This is recommended. Slight differences in search word syntax exist from database to database, so if this is your first time with this particular newspaper, it's a good idea to review the examples.

After you have specified the search words, IQuest I will go to work. It will log in to VU/TEXT, access the database for your specified newspaper and make the search.

At this point, it's a good idea to turn on the printer, if your system has that capability, because once the search is finished, the system will display headings for up to 15 of the most recent full-text articles it has found for you. In the heading of each, you'll see the date of the story and the headline.

IQuest also will display your charges so far — $7 for the initial search. For no extra charge, you can choose one of the stories to view in full. Extra charges are incurred if you view additional stories or see headings of the next 15 stories the system has found.

After you've retrieved the story of interest, you can log off IQuest at that menu.

And there's a faster way to use IQuest to search newspaper files. If you already know the name of the newspaper you want to search, you can bypass those layers of menus by using IQuest II.

After selecting the IQuest II option from the top of that feature, you'll be asked to indicate the name of the database. Suppose you know in advance that you wanted to look at stories from VU/TEXT's database of The Chicago Tribune. You would type CHICAGO TRIBUNE at the database prompt. Then you would be prompted for the keywords just as you are on IQuest I.

But how do you find out if IQuest has a particular newspaper online? There are two ways.

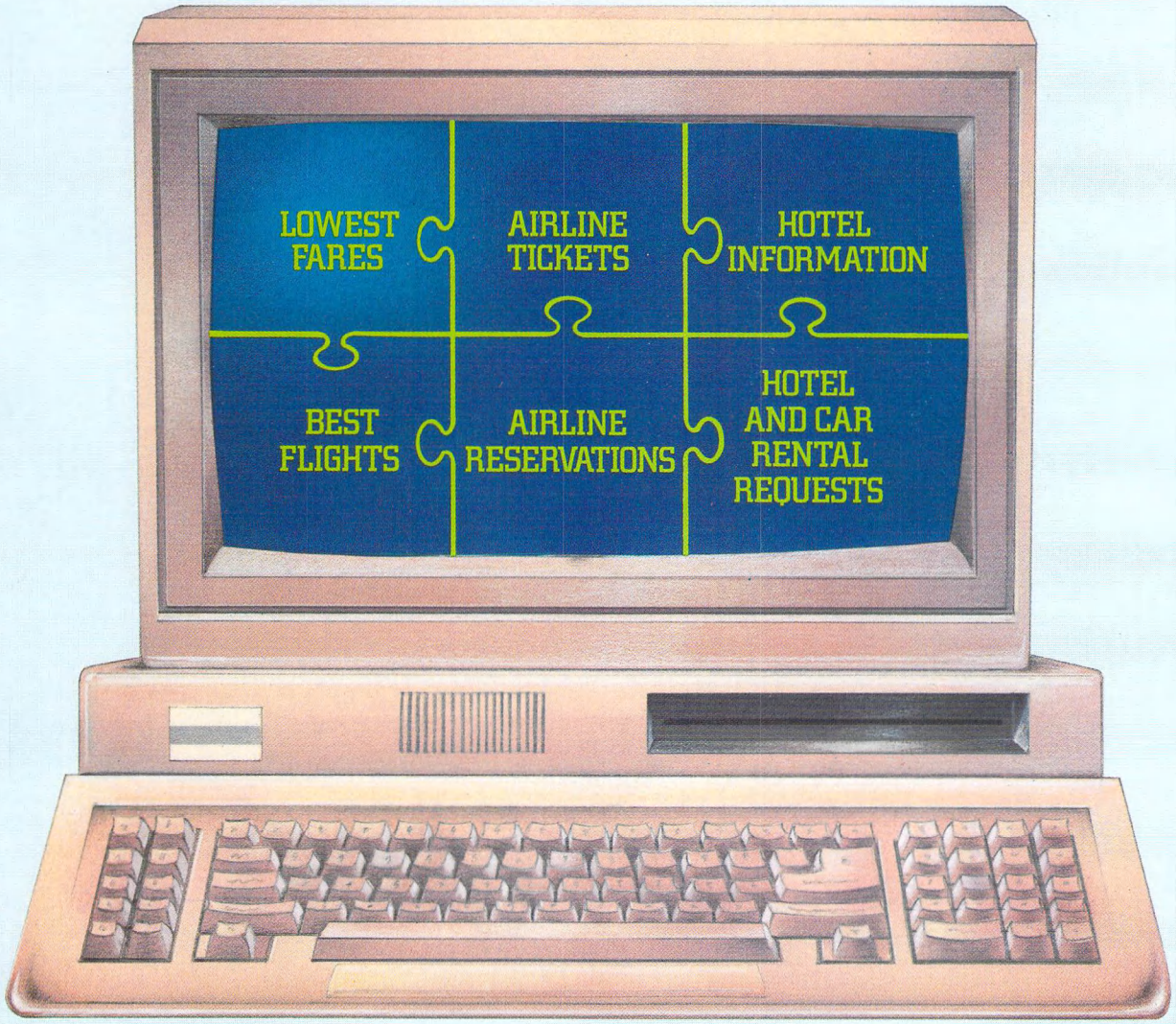
First, as mentioned, IQuest has a complete list of its databases online. Notice on the menu that results from your GO IQUEST command that one says "List databases." Select that, and you'll see that IQuest subdivides the list in alphabetical order. Suppose you wanted to know if the San Jose (Calif.) Mercury News is online. You need only check that portion of the database list.

If you can't find a newspaper on the list, you also can ask for real-time, online help through the SOS command. After you've accessed the IQuest system, you can type SOS, and this will signal an IQuest worker to come online. Then you can simply type in your question.

VU/TEXT is adding new databases all the time. Stay in touch with "What's New" (GO NEW) and *Online Today Electronic Edition*, (GO OLT) for news of other additions to IQuest.

Charles Bowen is a contributing editor from Huntington, W.Va., and co-author of How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe. *His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,411.*

Now there's a travel and reservation system that puts all the pieces together.



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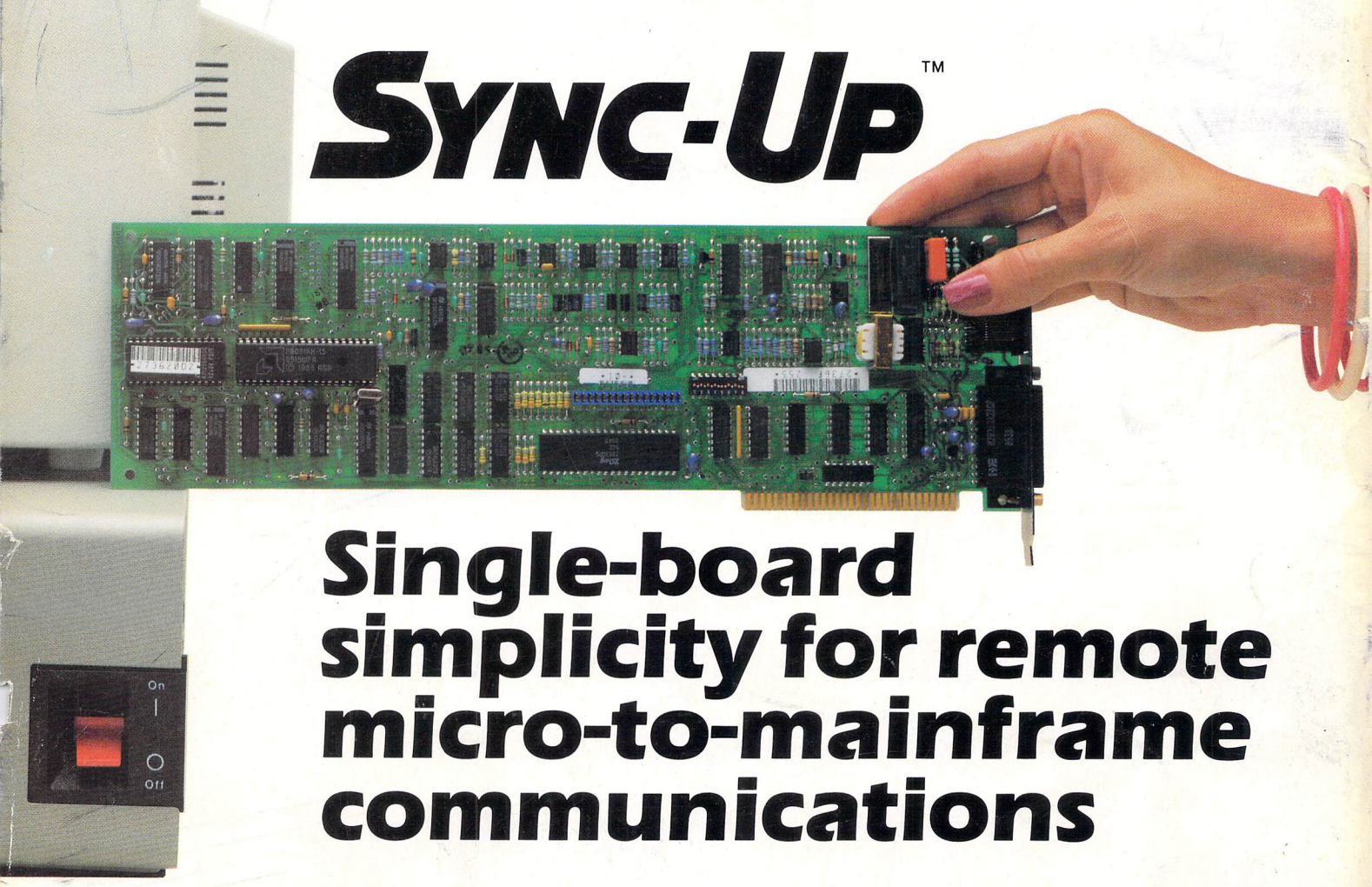

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